The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LVI NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1928 NUMBER 719

Contents

The Week 82

Editorials

Agitation through Action 84
Hoover, Smith and Private Enterprise 86
Japan and Manchuria 88

General Articles

New Bedford's Strike—a Knockout or a Comeback? .....Robert Morss Lovett 90
The Somewhat Happy Warrior .....Felix Ray 93
The Re-Discovery of America—XX..Waldo Frank 94
Lethe (verse) .....Edna St. Vincent Millay 98
Washington Notes .....T. R. B. 99
Three Poems .....Carl Sandburg 100
Encaustics .....Stark Young 100
City Room and Squared Circle .....B. B. 102

Correspondence 102

Reviews of Books

The Gentlemanly Tradition .....R. M. L. 104
Nile, the Civilizer .....Alexander Goldenweiser 105
Another War—On Paper .....Edward Mead Earle 106
Recent Fiction 107

The Week

AN EVENT which almost overshadows the actual signing of the Kellogg treaty is the fact that Russia has decided to adhere to it. To be sure, the statement of intention is accompanied by the usual Russian outburst against the capitalistic powers. M. Litvinoff, who writes it, deplores the fact that the agreement contains no obligation for disarmament. He urges that not only war should be abolished, but blockades, occupation of territory, and even the withholding of recognition, which "contributes to the creation of an atmosphere favorable to the outbreak of wars." Russia objects, furthermore, to the French and British reservations and to the supposed American stipulation regarding the Monroe Doctrine. But all this is of little importance compared to the major fact that she is willing to sign. She thus takes another long step toward reconciliation with the western world, and by doing so has lessened the likelihood of a new war in Europe, which is so little diminished by the Kellogg treaty itself.

IN a statement which should live for many years in Mexican memory, President Calles has renounced all ambition to be reëlected to office as successor to the murdered General Obregon. In strong and solemn words, he urges his country not to turn again to dictatorship, which has been the curse of Mexico for so many years, but to proceed by orderly process of representative government. Both by what he said, and by the decision which he announced, he has shown himself a genuine patriot. It remains to be seen whether the country will prove able to take his advice. The army, which in the past has been a source of danger in times like these, gives evidence of being loyal to the Calles regime. The political influence of organized labor seems at present to be waning somewhat, but in any case the Crom is disinclined to support any selfish adventurer. Relations with the United States are better than in years, and the religious quarrel seems to be on the way to a compromise which will at least afford a *modus vivendi*. If Mexico can get through the next few critical weeks in safety, the skies ahead are brighter than they have ever been.

DR. R. L. BUELL, Research Director of the Foreign Policy Association of the United States, speaking during the last week of the Williamstown Institute of Politics, made a sweeping attack upon the Firestone concession to grow rubber in Liberia. He charged that, however benign the intentions of Harvey Firestone and his associates, when three million men are put at work on a million acres of land, it will certainly result in forced labor and the disruption of native life. In his opinion, the new $5,000,000 loan upon which, he says, Mr. Firestone insisted, was unnecessary and undesirable. It is made at 7 percent, runs until 1967, and may not even be refunded during the first twenty years without Mr. Firestone's consent. It will itself be used to refund a previous loan at only 5 percent, which would have expired in 1952. Dr. Buell believes the American government is involved in the enterprise to an undesirable extent. He points out that in case of dispute between Liberia and the Finance Corporation which represents the Firestone interests, our State Department is to arrange arbitra-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion. Liberia is to have a financial advisor, appointed by President Coolidge, who has already designated William R. Castle, Jr., our acting Secretary of State, for the post. The country has been involved in a boundary dispute with France, and the Liberians believe that the Firestone concession carried with it the active interest of the United States in preventing seizure by France of Liberian territory.

THESE charges have produced a hailstorm of denials. Mr. Firestone declares that the open door is still open in Liberia. Mr. Castle insists that the United States did not approve the loan, but merely suggested some changes in it of value to the Liberians—among them, a reduction of its length from ninety-nine years. President King of Liberia cables over to say that the loan was not made under coercion. Dr. Thomas J. Jones, educational director of the Phelps-Stokes fund, thinks Mr. Firestone means well by Liberia, and says several educational and humanitarian associations interested in the affairs of the Negro republic have endorsed the enterprise. Laymen, naturally, cannot judge as between these experts. Dr. Buell is one of the world's leading authorities on conditions in Africa; and the haste and fury with which everyone involved in the Firestone concession has risen to its defense will suggest to some suspicious persons that their consciences are not as easy as they should be. But whatever the merits of the controversy, it is absurd for the State Department to deny that it gives the fullest possible degree of coöperation to American business men abroad, or that what results may fairly be called economic imperialism.

SEPTEMBER 1, which inaugurates the first year of full or standard payments under the Dawes Plan, has come and gone without a crisis. Economists have predicted that this will be the crucial year, and that its results are almost certain to bring about a final revision of the reparations tangle. But no trouble has yet arisen, for the simple reason that foreign loans are still being sent into Germany in large enough amounts to offset the increased payments from Germany, and so to prevent any disastrous fall in the exchange value of the mark which might otherwise halt transfer proceedings. As long as citizens of other nations lend Germany enough to pay her debts, there can be no immediate trouble. The crisis is postponed. The difficulty is that the ultimate problem becomes even more serious, because the principal of the new loans, and the interest charges on them, are added to what was already due from Germany. Only a striking increase of German production and exports can liquidate them all. When, if ever, will this take place? If it does not take place, how long will Germany be able to continue the import of capital? These questions remain to be answered. This year may pass without serious incident, but a day of reckoning must some time arrive.

JUST as wheat was Republican in 1924, so this year it bids fair to be Democratic. In the spring and early summer before the last presidential election, discontent was widespread among the western wheat farmers, and straw ballots showed La Follette, who made a special appeal to them, running far ahead of the popular vote he actually received in these states on election day. What happened in the meantime? A bumper crop of wheat in the United States coincided with short crops elsewhere; the world price rose and our farmers had plenty to sell at the better prices. Agricultural discontent simmered down, as it always does when temporary conditions fortuitously improve the farmers' position. But this year the luck seems to be running the other way. The American crop is large, though not unduly so, but the Canadian and other competitive crops are of unusual proportions. Prices are falling. Unless something happens between now and election day to blight the prospects of abnormal world production, American wheat farmers will be pinched. In that case, their probable revolt against the Republican ticket will not be as illogical as was their sudden conversion to it in 1924. For they may truly say that, in spite of all the promises of four years ago, and in spite of all their efforts to get action in the meantime, nothing has been done to insure the wheat farmer more stable market conditions, or to protect him from foreign competition.

IN SPITE of relatively high rates for money, the stock market is boiling again. Speculators for the rise refuse to be discouraged, although the total of brokers' loans has been little reduced. Those who predict still higher stock prices assert that the Federal Reserve authorities arbitrarily tried to deflate the market by "artificially" high rates, that they failed to do so except for a limited period in the summer, that the reserves of the system are ample, and that in order to moderate the effect of the high rates upon legitimate business, the banking authorities will be forced to reduce them again this fall. All this may be true. But it is hardly likely that the Reserve authorities would allow their reserves to be called upon to an indefinitely greater extent for speculative purposes, when these reserves are supposed to be held in as liquid a condition as possible, to guard against real crises of stringency which might be disastrous to business. The reserves of the Reserve Banks are comparatively small in relation to the total volume of credit, and therefore small changes in their liquidity are important. We do not see how the rediscount rate could be safely lowered before brokers' loans are materially reduced, unless the Reserve authorities were to inaugurate a practice of making different rediscount rates for different kinds of loans.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Agitation through Action

THE New Republic was fortunate in being able to publish in the issue which contained a statement of the reasons for coöperating to elect Governor Smith to the presidency, Mr. Norman Thomas' attack on Smith as a possible progressive candidate and his personal plea, as Socialist nominee, for progressive support. Its readers may derive from a comparison of the conflicting arguments some help in reaching or reënforcing their individual preferences among the nominees. For the debate concerned the most doubtful question which progressives, in casting their votes, will have to decide. From their point of view Mr. Hoover is out of the running. Millions of citizens will vote for him from explicable and creditable motives. The American people are to be congratulated that a party which could content itself with Warren Harding as its presidential candidate and which could idolize Calvin Coolidge as his successor could persuade itself to nominate for the office as intelligent, disinterested and humane a man as Herbert Hoover. But his pre-convention campaign and his speech of acceptance, taken together, have proved to the hilt that Mr. Hoover is no longer a progressive himself and is not campaigning for the support of progressives. Their choice lies between Al Smith and Norman Thomas. The New Republic has in its two last issues indicated some of the reasons which have persuaded its editors to prefer Smith. The writers of these articles did not, however, before preparing them, enjoy the advantage of reading Mr. Thomas' specific plea for progressive support. The ability and the force of his criticism of Governor Smith as a candidate for progressives entitle his argument to special attention and a discussion in more detail.

With Mr. Thomas' all-important point "that Governor Smith is the candidate of an essentially and hopelessly reactionary party," the New Republic dealt in the second article which declared its own reasons for preferring Governor Smith. But it may be worth while to transpose the argument into somewhat different terms. In spite of the final disagreement about the candidate for whom progressives should vote, there is a large measure of agreement about underlying principles between Mr. Thomas and ourselves. We agree with him in recognizing that government in the United States is government by disciplined national parties and will so remain no matter whether the country is governed by progressives or conservatives. We agree with him also that the two parties which now divide the government between them are thoroughly unprogressive. We agree with him that the political regeneration of the American commonwealth depends upon the substitution for one of the existing parties of a thoroughly radical party which seeks just as tenaciously and ingeniously to reform the existing distribution of political and economic power as the Democratic and Republican parties now seek to preserve it. In 1920 and 1924 the New Republic supported candidates who represented attempts to find a place on the political map for a more radical party, and in similar circumstances it would be ready and willing to advocate a similar choice. But on certain important accounts the circumstances which shape the present election are sharply different from those which prevailed four and eight years ago. Mr. Thomas' argument does not recognize these differences.

The effort to organize a politically effective radical party in the United States has for the time being failed. Such a party must recruit its membership from those manual and intellectual workers who for one reason or another are not adequately represented in the management of the economic and political activities of the country, and these workers have at present no consciousness of impotence and small disposition to seek some route toward collective self-assertion. All but an insignificant minority of them are inert and contented. They are not aware how completely their government is dominated by one privileged class. Fifty years of Socialist or progressive agitation have not penetrated to the quiet of their consciousness. They are still interested more in what they can get out of the existing system than in trying to alter radically its balance of power. The attempts to create a Farmer-Labor party have for the time being, consequently, proved to be abortive. The La Follette Progressive party succeeded in recruiting much support, but its quick disintegration after its failure in 1924 demonstrated its lack of integrity and vitality. There only remains the Socialist remnant, which has nominated Mr. Thomas. The New Republic welcomes its refusal to be extinguished. We recognize that its platform expresses a much closer approximation to a progressive national policy than that which the Democratic party, under Smith leadership, can in the near future possibly accept. But sound political strategy is largely a matter of getting something started which may move in the desired direction. From this point of view we cannot see that a vote for Norman Thomas expresses anything but an intellectual preference or satisfies anything but an emotional antipathy to existing social controls. Middle-class intellectuals like Mr. Thomas himself, like most of the Socialist agitators, like his adherents in college faculties and like so many progressives, including the editors of the New Republic, are not the stuff out of which a dynamic party of radical opposition can be wrought.

The most sensible way in which such intellectuals can express their intelligence at present is to recognize the limitations of their own fruitful political activity. The immediate cultural necessity of progressive politics in America is an honest and efficient political alternative to Republicanism as the dogmatic political instrument of the American plutocracy. The enemies of Republicanism among

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the intellectuals are not capable of stirring up, organizing and leading a body of voters sufficiently large and resolute to constitute an effective opposition party. It is not the initial feebleness of these radical partisan experiments which is the source of their weakness. The Free-Soil party started with a handful. They lack the power of adaptation and growth. Those among them who are single-minded and are capable of a sustained flight of conviction remain numerically negligible. On the other hand, whenever the will to protest excites a considerable measure of popular support, as it did in 1912 and 1924, the larger numbers of the radicals soon betray their lack of any binding element except incoherent progressive sentiment. Their party unity cannot survive either the discipline of adversity or the responsibility of success. They require as a condition of growth the ability to arouse a sense of grievance among the workers. The people who own the wealth and operate the industries of the country are the only Americans who nourish themselves on class consciousness, and in their case it is rationalized, if not emasculated, by a conviction, as often as not an honest one, that the existing American commonwealth is the incarnation in law and practice of a material democratic economy, which produces wealth in maximum abundance and distributes with the utmost possible social justice.

Assuming, then, that they are not themselves capable of setting up a growing political opposition to Republicanism, the only chance which for the time being progressives have of fomenting such an opposition is to seize upon promising progressive seedlings in the Democratic party and try to fertilize them. This was the policy which many of them pursued in 1916, and thereby they contributed essentially to the second election of Woodrow Wilson. Since his failure and death, the Democracy has drifted along without any sense of direction or any man at the helm. As the years have passed, it has been sucked more and more into the Republican drainage area. It looked until recently as if it was unable to make any headway against this tendency to succumb to the magnetism of the Republican system, but just as it was about to drift finally into the ignominious position of an accomplice, it pulled up and sought salvation by repeating an old Democratic practice. It confided its destiny to its only popular leader who had proved his ability to fight the Republicans successfully. The question for progressives to answer is whether or not this Democratic presidential candidate, Alfred Smith, is sufficiently equipped and disposed to check and prevent the tendency to Republicanize the Democratic party, and if he is, whether he can shape it into a loyal and dangerous enemy of Republican domination.

Mr. Thomas denies both that the Democratic party deserves to be rescued by a fighting Democratic leader and that Governor Smith is sufficiently explicit and thorough-going as a progressive successfully to do the job and play the part. The New Republic believes, on the contrary, for reasons which we have already stated at length, that the Democratic party contains in its membership millions of voters who can be converted to a measure of progressivism by able and aggressive leadership. But this leadership must call itself Democratic and must seek to reconstruct the Democratic party, rather than to supersede it. We consider that Al Smith is fully prepared to start them on a progressive march and, if elected, to purge the party of its reactionaries and to tempt other party progressives into its ranks. Those who agree with the New Republic and decide on some such grounds to vote for Smith are taking a kind of chance which the supporters of Mr. Norman Thomas are not obliged to take. A vote for Thomas is chiefly a negative vote. Being cast for a candidate who cannot be elected, its effect its to wash the hands of the voter of all responsibility for the government of the nation during four years. In so far as such a vote has any positive significance, it affirms the reality of an intellectual rather than a political alternative to Republicanism. A progressive vote for Smith is, on the contrary, an affirmation of the reality of a supposititious political alternative to Republicanism. Those who so affirm should in candor admit that its results may disappoint them.

The New Republic prefers the positive political alternative, even though it involves a gamble, to the empty negative intellectual assertion. Governor Smith's speech of acceptance has convinced us that he fully understands, as for instance Mr. Raskob does not, that it is his business to organize and lead an effective national opposition to Republicanism. He realizes that in carrying on this enterprise he must be willing, whenever the immediate circumstances justify it, to challenge the power and oppose the demands of privileged wealth and business. He realizes that he cannot set up an effective Democratic opposition to the Republican party without digging up and developing a progressive economic policy for the Democratic party. If elected, he will be capable of formulating such a policy and fighting for its adoption. Mr. Thomas dwells at some length on the flaws, from the progressive point of view, in Governor Smith's record in New York. We do not dispute the truth of his criticism, but the facts do not trouble us to the extent that they trouble Mr. Thomas. As Governor of New York, Al Smith was engaged in fighting Republicanism on a comparatively narrow front. He was not elected to his present office as a particularly progressive Democrat. Yet it is extraordinary, considering his political antecedents as a Tammany man and as an uninhibited partisan Democrat, how many of his policies and contentions deserved to be approved by progressives. He represents an unsatisfied rather than a satisfied ingredient in the American people, but that is not the most important aspect of his potential progressivism. He em-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bodies, above all, the practice of acting on his political promises and of laboring to give reality to them. He is not, like the conventional progressive, primarily a propagandist for certain causes and programs. It is his habit and practice to find an equivalent in effective political action for any projects which he may entertain. He is not as much of a propagandist for progressivism as we would like him to be, but, considering the failure of Socialist or progressive propaganda to mold the American public mind, it is just as well to try for a while a different method of agitation. As an honest politician in politics rather than an intellectual or a reformer, it is Al Smith's method to agitate by means of getting action, and the disposition of the American people being what it is, their attention will be captured and their ideas influenced more by a pound of agitation which is provoked by action, than they will be by a cartload of agitation which is prompted by ideas.

Of course, Al Smith, in order to have a chance to act, will have first to be elected, and in order to get elected he will have to make speeches in which he reveals and proclaims the limited range of his ideas. He is exemplifying a fundamental paradox in the moral economy of a democratic commonwealth, which needs to be governed by honest and inquisitive men of action, but whose voters are most accessible to enthusiastic and fluent talkers. Fortunately his fellow countrymen are coming to understand that, more than anything else, Al Smith is an honest political actor. Those progressives who support him will bet their votes on him not as a progressive propagandist but as a man of parts and affairs rather than a man of causes and doctrines. The attribute of his type of manhood is its power of using the varying circumstances of his position and life as an opportunity for self-education and growth. He grew as the result of his experience as a Tammany legislator at Albany, as the result of his experience as Speaker of the Assembly, as the result of his experiences as a candidate for Governor and as Governor. He now seems to be growing as the result of his experience as candidate for President, but, of course, if he is really capable of profiting by the opportunities of his position, he will grow most of all as President of the United States. The great majority of our presidential candidates and Presidents have either stopped growing or, like Mr. Hoover, have begun to retrograde before they are nominated or elected, but there is every indication that Al Smith is still riding free on the tide of his own career. If he can do as much for his self-education in the university of the presidential office as he has in the high school of the governorship of New York, it will be worth while for progressives to do what they can to give him the chance. He cannot complete his education in the White House without adding to the reality of American political life and without enlarging the political consciousness of his fellow countrymen.

Hoover, Smith, and Private Enterprise

A NEW book by Professor Taylor of Columbia, "Making Goods and Making Money" (Macmillan) furnishes a background for a comparison of Hoover and Smith in their meanings to our economic order. Professor Taylor does not discuss the political issues of the day; rather, his book is a study of basic economic theory, and of the light thrown on it by the present industrial situation. But out of that situation grow many of the concrete issues on which the candidates have declared themselves, or are asked to declare themselves.

The theory to which Mr. Taylor addresses his mind is that which concerns the degree of correspondence between the impulse of individuals to make money under an economy of free enterprise, and the interest of society as a whole in as large as possible a production of useful or desirable goods. There is a long-standing historical dispute concerning this matter. Adam Smith and his followers have contended that, under free competition, the pecuniary interests of the individual would lead him unconsciously to serve best the interests of society, while a long line of economic protestants, from Sismondi and Ricardo down to Veblen and Hobson, have contended in one way or another that the two interests were opposed. Mr. Taylor, like most inductive students, sees merit in both positions. In some cases one seems to be right, in some cases the other. He believes that there is nothing universal or unalterable in either assumption, and that, in so far as the individual interest in making money tends to restrict production, that conflict arises not from human nature or eternal laws, but from cultural conditions. He contends that either absolute resolution of the dilemma—an attempt to make the social interest all-powerful through some system such as communism, or an effort to make the pecuniary interest supreme through a system of complete individualism—would be undesirable, because lacking essential elements of general benefit. The problem is to reach the best possible practical adjustment, retaining the useful ingredients of both sets of motives with as little of their harmful elements as necessary.

One method of doing this is, of course, by conscious social control exercised through political agencies, or through ethical imperatives. The anti-trust laws, the regulation of businesses "affected by a public interest," or the more creative shiftings of balance effected through such agencies as the Federal Reserve System, are examples of political control. Individual resolutions and preachments to prefer the general interest when it conflicts with private interest are examples of ethical control. But both have distinct limitations. Limitations upon political control have been imposed many

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

times by judicial interpretations of the Constitution, or by pressure on governmental agencies exerted by the powerful groups which it is desired to regulate. The limitations of ethical control result from the conditions of economic survival in a competitive order.

Our greatest hope, Professor Taylor believes, therefore lies in changes which are integral in industry; which so set the conditions of business that making money becomes identical with making goods. And he contends that recent developments in American industry have constituted powerful impulses in that direction. The enlargement of the scale of production which has come from the division of labor, from the elaboration of machine processes, from the greater use of mechanical power, from the standardization of products, and from the widening of the domestic market, has in the case of many important industries created a situation in which it is more profitable to sell many units at a low price than few units at a high price. Most readers will admit the contention without the careful substantiation which Mr. Taylor supplies. One of his chief points, however, has sufficient ironic interest to be repeated. A theory of Veblen is, that the fixed charges which private ownership levies against industry have a tendency to grow, through the capitalization of expected profits. Therefore those who "get something for nothing" tend to become supreme in the sharing of the product. Without disputing Veblen's detailed argument, Mr. Taylor points out that the increased burden of fixed charges in modern industry makes it more costly to shut down or to limit production, and more profitable to increase the product as rapidly as possible.

A superficial generalization from these conclusions (here crudely summarized) might appear to favor Hoover. There is little hope from conscious social control through political agencies, one might infer, but much hope from the improved and changing technique of industry. It is Hoover's chief mission to encourage industry to eliminate waste and regulate its own processes intelligently; but he tends to stop short of those measures of political control which would enforce upon industrial groups any regulation which they do not ask for. He is interested in more development and wider use of electric power; but not in public ownership of power plants or federal regulation of utilities. He gives to business a generous array of statistical information which it may use to regularize its activities and increase its profits, but he has not moved in the direction of compulsory insurance against unemployment. He aids industrial groups to achieve programs of simplification in sizes and styles, which mean lower costs of production, but he has devised no way of using the agencies of government to pass their economies on to the consumer. He is moving at once in the path of least resistance and of greatest benefit.

But such a generalization would be unwarranted. If Mr. Taylor's analysis were carried further, it might justify quite another policy. He admits that the tendency of industry to reduce costs and so to increase output operates only up to the limits of expansion of the market. When a market ceases to expand, monopoly restriction may be more profitable. There are many cases, too, where there is a theoretical possibility of market expansion, which is not realized because the effective demand of the consumers is not sufficient. This limitation of effective demand may, and often does, spring from the policy of industrial concerns themselves in not sharing their gains sufficiently with consumers through paying higher wages or charging lower prices. Even if we admit that in such cases the ultimate interests of profit would be served by a less restrictive policy, the individual concern is often unwilling to change or incapable of changing.

The bituminous coal industry has a limited market; coal, though an essential source of power, is a minor factor in productive costs, and the demand for it is but little dependent on the price charged. Mr. Hoover has advocated leaving the coal industry free to work out its own salvation through competition and improved technique, believing that thus the less efficient would be eliminated and production concentrated in the more efficient units. But it does not work out that way. The competition which leads coal operators to adopt more efficient processes also leads to increases in the aggregate product which periodically drive the price down below cost of production even of the efficient. Efficiency demands investment in machinery, which leads to heavy overhead charges, running on whether a mine is busy or idle. Thus the result may be to handicap the efficient until supply is reduced to the proportions of demand. The result of coal competition is, too, to degrade labor. The coal industry needs a type of social control which it is not likely to achieve through the operation of industrial pecuniary motives. And if a monopoly capable of restricting production were to arise under private ownership in soft coal (as it has in anthracite), there would be little pecuniary motive to reduce prices, on account of the limits of the market. In such cases the consumer requires protection. This is just an example of the many exceptions to Mr. Taylor's thesis.

Governor Smith, of course, has no more theoretical objections to the existing industrial order in the large than has Mr. Hoover. It may be a practical advantage, however, that he has not worked out any comprehensive theory with regard to it. For he does have a keen sense that as a political official he is the representative and guardian of the larger public interests—especially of the welfare of consumers and wage-earners. And whenever, in a concrete instance, it is plain to him that he should act in this capacity, he is not inhibited by any general belief as to superior claims

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of private enterprise in the person of the industrialist. He is therefore far more apt to favor those measures of social control through political agencies which may benefit the public. These, in so far as Mr. Taylor's thesis is true, would help American industry to achieve its own destiny, even though industry were opposed to the measures at the time of enactment. In so far as the thesis does not apply, such measures ought to be enacted anyway.

To say that conscious social control through political agencies has been limited by judicial interpretation of the Constitution and by the political power of interested groups is not to say that the present limits are desirable. Before we have built a really sufficient economic order we shall have to expand the limits considerably, as we have done in the past. But it takes active pressure in the public interest to expand them. Because Governor Smith is a dynamic personality whose experience and temperament have created in him a belief in the reality of political agencies as a source of public benefit, he may be counted upon to force the pace in the adjustment of pecuniary gain to social welfare. The improvement which industry's desire for gain leads it to make will be made in any case. Hoover would be better fitted than Smith to act as an engineering counsel to business, but Smith is better fitted than Hoover to act as political representative of society.

Japan and Manchuria

OF THE four elements in the present quarrel between Japan and China, three could be settled without much difficulty. The Chinese Nationalists could arrange about the Nanking affair as they have already done with Great Britain and the United States. The Tsinan-fu incident is more or less the same thing with the roles of the two nations reversed. The dispute over the abrogation of the commercial treaty could be settled if Japan would sign a new agreement with China like that the United States has negotiated, giving her most-favored-nation treatment. The real and serious issue between the two powers is, of course, the future of Manchuria.

For many years this province was ruled by the ex-bandit, Chang Tso-lin, who was hardly more than the representative of Japan. So openly was this the case, that when he was beleaguered in his capital by Chinese soldiers, Japanese troops raised the siege and restored him to authority. But today, Chang Tso-lin is dead, killed as he fled north before the victorious Nationalist armies which turned him out of Peking. Manchuria is nominally ruled by one of his sons, but the boy is a weakling and seems unlikely to last long. The Nationalists are insisting that the province belongs to them, and legally their case is excellent. Chinese sovereignty was recognized in the Nine-Power Treaty which grew out of the Washington conference of 1921, and the Japanese position is an extra-legal one except in regard to control of the South Manchurian Railway. Even this, and the lease of Kwantung, are disputed by China. Spokesmen for the Tanaka government do not dare to admit that they hope to get complete political control; they only say that Manchuria must not be turned over to the Chinese government just yet. The reasons alleged are that that government is still insecure, and that it is tainted with radicalism. These statements, however, are somewhat less than candid. While they are being made, other and less official Japanese spokesmen repeat what Baron Tanaka said a year ago, that Japan's "special interest" in Manchuria must be recognized and will never be abandoned. The demand is based on the vast number of men Japan lost in the war with Russia, the huge investments her bankers have made in Manchuria, the claim to control of the South Manchurian Railway, and the economic importance of the province as a source of raw materials for Japanese manufacture, and as a market for her goods.

Behind all this, there is a situation in Japan about which her statesmen rarely talk, though it probably colors their actions more than any other. In the past hundred years, Japan, like some of the Western powers, has been on a debauch of babies, a joy-ride of overpopulation. As a result, she has reached a position similar to that of Great Britain, discussed by Mr. Brailsford in last week's issue of the New Republic. Great Britain can supply from her internal resources food for about one-half her population, or some 22,000,000 people. Japan is feeding about two-thirds of her 60,000,000.

Until less than a century ago, the Japanese population was stationary, and was probably well under 30,000,000. It was kept down, we are told, by the same device used in Polynesia and elsewhere—ruthless and widespread infanticide. With the opening up of the Island Kingdom to Western influence, infanticide greatly diminished, and as sanitation improved, the death rate declined. The birth rate, however, did not fall at anything like a corresponding speed; while the Europeans taught the Japanese many things, birth control was not one of them. In 1926, the Japanese birth rate was 34.8 per 1,000 per annum. That rate should be compared with one of 27.2 in Italy, 20.6 in the United States, 19.5 in Germany, 18.8 in France, and 17.8 in England. It is true that the Japanese death rate is higher than that of any of these countries, but the difference is not so great as in the case of births. The Japanese rate per 1,000 persons per annum is 19.2, that of France 17.4, Italy 16.8, the United States 12.2, and England and Germany both 11.7. Thus the Japanese annual increase is very much the highest. It is 15.6 per 1,000 persons, one of the largest in the world. It may be compared with Italy's increase of 10.4, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

United States' 8.4, Germany's 7.8, Great Britain's 6.1, and France's 1.4.

It is true, of course, that the birth rate in Japan is falling somewhat, as it is all over the world; but as the statistics reveal, the decline there has been less than in any other important power. Nor is it likely, as things now are, to continue. The Buddhist religion, which most of the Japanese follow, is opposed to birth control, and the government's attitude is on the whole hostile. Professor E. A. Ross estimates that not more than 1 percent of the people are sufficiently westernized to make voluntary limitation of offspring a possibility during this generation. The death rate, on the other hand, could without much difficulty be reduced 50 percent. Particularly is this true of the infant death rate of 137.5 per 1,000 live births, which is more than three times that of New Zealand, the leading country in this respect.

This tremendous increase in population, most of which has come within the past seventy-five years, has accompanied the industrialization of the country. As in other parts of the world, the increase in factories and in population act upon each other in a vicious circle. Machines need workers, and at the same time make it possible to find food for them. Since the year 1900, Japan's foreign trade has increased ten-fold, and her machine equipment, and the number of persons employed in industry, have grown in the same or a greater proportion. Today her 60,000,000 people are crowded into an area which is a little larger than Montana, but is much smaller than California. Even of this amount of land, five-sixths is untillable. The average Japanese farm is less than an acre in extent, and most of her people are sunk in poverty.

While Japan is able to support her surplus 20,000,000 as Great Britain does, by exporting manufactured goods and importing food, this is a process on which neither country can rely indefinitely. Japan's two best customers are the United States and China, which take respectively about 40 and 25 percent of her exports. Chief among the products which go to America is silk; and the artificial silk industry is already a dangerous rival to the product of the worm. Other exports to our shores are menaced by the vagaries of our tariff system, and by the expansion of our industry which, through improved technical methods, tends to overcome Japan's advantage of low wages (which do not necessarily mean low labor cost). Broadly speaking, Japan sends nothing to China which the latter country cannot manufacture for itself, as it proceeds through the same cycle of industrialization. Great Britain, in a plight like Japan's, is lowering the birth rate so rapidly that, as things are now going, within a decade her population will have ceased to expand; but, for the reasons indicated, Japan has thus far taken no steps in the same direction.

This set of circumstances was, of course, partially responsible for Japan's action in annexing Korea, obtaining part of Sakhalin, and leasing Kwantung. It is not to be wondered at that Manchuria should also enter into her calculations. Manchuria has huge resources, and is comparatively empty, with a population of only 25,000,000. A million Chinese have come up to it from the South in a short time, and two million more are expected to do so—against a total Japanese population of only 200,000. Already, a large part of the Japanese food comes from that province. It offers a growing market for Japanese manufactures. Japanese statesmen still adhere to the argument of the Italians, that emigration relieves population pressure, although the experience of generations, and the Italian example most of all, demonstrates that without artificial limitation of population in addition it does no such thing, and that as fast as the emigrants are sent away, the cradles are filled again.

While the population problem confronting the Japanese is a serious one, it is, of course, a domestic question only. The day has passed when any nation has the right to use its own reckless overbreeding to justify a course of action in international affairs which would be inexcusable if its population were stationary. The only way out for Japan is, not to take more territory on the mainland, but to cut her birth rate; and the sooner she begins to take steps in this direction, the better. There is, obviously, no objection from the point of view of China, or anyone else, to her maintaining and increasing her trade with Manchuria. That development, however, does not necessitate any degree of political control of the province. There is no reason why her legitimate ambitions should not be met through arrangements with the Nationalist government which would benefit Manchuria and Japan alike, and produce a greatly increased good will among the Chinese south of the Great Wall, which would be highly advantageous to Japanese trade. What is now an opportunity for Japanese statesmanship is likely before long to become a desperate necessity; and therefore the sooner the task is taken up, the better.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1928, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK
HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN GEORGE SOULE
EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG R. M. LOVETT

ASSISTANT EDITOR: T. S. MATTHEWS

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN ROBERT LITTELL
LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL
LEO WOLMAN ELINOR WYLIE

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Bedford's Strike—a Knockout or a Comeback?

I

THE Whaling Museum of New Bedford is a mausoleum of a vanished industry. From the exhibits there contained it is easy for imagination to reconstruct the experience of the whaler; there are the models of the vessels, the whaleboats, the harpoons and harpoon guns, and the admirable paintings by Mr. Ashley depicting the chase and capture, from the moment when a miniature water spout gave the signal "thar' she blows," to that in which the big carcass was moored alongside for cutting up and trying out on deck. I find myself supplementing these exhibits by memories of a half a century ago, when as a small boy I used to be led "down-street" of an afternoon by an uncle who was one of the diminishing band of whaling-captains, and allowed to sit in a Windsor chair in the twilight of the rear of Charlie Haskell's hat-shop, or Alonzo Wordell's ship chandlery, where with half a dozen colleagues my uncle passed the time of day. Nothing more. It seemed incredible that men who had seen the happy isles of the South Seas when they were still happy, and the glacier-bound coast of Alaska; who had been wrecked in the Okotsk Sea and had their ships burned by the "Shenandoah"—incredible that they should so seldom refer to these proceedings. But by way of compensation there were the grass-grown wharves, where a score of old whaling vessels were moored, whose tarry rigging led one to the top-gallant-mast top, and where hundreds of barrels of oil were parked under seaweed, awaiting a turn in the market which never came. In the textile school of New Bedford they show you examples of the finest weaves of cotton, the product of the patient skill of weavers who had their training in Lancashire, and of the ingenuity of American loom makers. One wonders if this textile school is to become the mausoleum of another dead industry.

It is the happy distinction of New Bedford to have been twice a leader among cities of the world. In the early nineteenth century, it took over from Nantucket and the Cape the supremacy in the whaling industry when whale-oil was the chief source of artificial light in civilization and whale-bone an essential component in the female figure. New Bedford ships swept the whaling-grounds of the Arctic, sending back their oil to the home port, and returning after three, five, in one case ten years, to be greeted with the modest celebrations of those simple days. The New Bedford owners were canny men and preferred to invest their profits at home. Even at the height of the whaling industry, the water power of the Acushnet River tempted them to follow the example of Lowell and build the Wamsutta cotton mill, incorporated in 1846. The returning whalers, rounding the eastward bulge of South America, usually touched at the Azores, where they picked up immigrants, and laid in New Bedford the first stratum of foreign population, the Portuguese. Thus the cotton industry grew directly out of whaling, which supplied capital and labor.

At the time of which I speak, fifty years ago, there were four mills in New Bedford, the Wamsutta, the Potomska, the Acushnet, and the Grinnell. Today there are twenty-seven, nearly all of which have a past record of remarkable prosperity. In 1898 there was a strike, following which there occurred an importation of skilled workers from Lancashire. New Bedford won a new supremacy, as the greatest producing center of fine cottons in the world. Today it is sending out the product of a single mill. All the others are closed by the strike. Some shares are quoted at par or above, depending on book value; others at a few dollars. Wamsutta, which spent its depreciation fund in renewing its plant, is quoted as a business proposition at thirty-five. Potomska, which has kept its depreciation fund in the bank, is about forty, in expectation of that much of a dividend in liquidation. What is the future of this city of 120,000 people? Once, when New Bedford lost an industry in which it led the world, it had already established its successor. Now there is nothing in sight.

The trouble began last April, when the mills in the Manufacturers' Association, without warning, posted a notice of a cut of 10 percent. The skilled workers—loom fixers, weavers, etc.—who were organized in seven local unions, voted to strike. This action would have resulted in a lockout for the remainder of the workers, but they accepted the action unanimously and did not return to the mills. The local unions joined the United Textile Workers, and received applications from thousands of the unskilled workers for membership. The left wing organizers entered the field, and formed the Textile Mills Committee, chiefly among the Portuguese and Polish workers. The United Textile Workers' officers requested and were granted a meeting with the representatives of the Manufacturers' Association. Mr. John Sullivan, the president, inquired, "What is there to talk about?" Mr. Binns of the United Textile Workers suggested that they talk about the strike. The meet-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing promptly adjourned. Later a conference was held by the Conciliation Committee of the Massachusetts State Board of Labor and Industry, at which the case for the workers was ably presented by their officers, assisted by Mr. Norman Ware of the Labor Bureau, Inc., of New York. This also was inconclusive.

Mr. Paul Blanshard, writing in the New Republic for May 23, found that the sympathy of the city, represented by its press, churches and other organizations, was largely with the strikers, and this attitude has not markedly changed in spite of some untoward incidents. When the mills decided to open, there was picketing; a local magistrate, Judge Millikan, ruled that a group of pickets constituted a common-law riot; and at his direction some 500 men and women were arrested and are under bail for trial. Most of these are members of the Textile Mills Committee, which claims to have $500,000 tied up in bail bonds. Mayor Ashley granted a permit to the Textile Mills Committee for a parade, which he later revoked; and in fear lest it take place in defiance of his orders, he assembled an auxiliary police force from other cities. Rain on the day appointed for the parade caused its postponement. In view of the type of officer usually sent on such foreign service, New Bedford may be thankful at escaping a tragedy such as that of Lawrence, in 1919. Nevertheless, there have been grievous incidents. Pinto, head of the local Textile Mills Committee, after numerous arrests, was horribly beaten up in jail. A barber named Frates, strike sympathizer, on his own property, was beaten up by a police lieutenant. Alphonse Lameiras, while waiting for a car in front of the station house from which he had just been released on bail, was ordered to move on, and when he tried to explain, was haled back into the station, beaten and thrown again into his cell. But these cases, it must be said, are few in consideration of the fact that 27,000 men are on strike.

It is greatly to their credit that New Bedford does not look like a stricken city. It is always a pleasant place in the summer, with its long water front, and hinterland of open country. There are fishing and gardening. Strike relief, which comes from locals of the American Federation of Labor, from the Workers' Relief, the Emergency Committee for Strike Relief, and from citizens, has been fairly adequate; but in a few weeks the good summer weather will be over and relief funds must be stretched to cover fuel and warm clothing. The money collected by the United Textile Workers is turned over to the Citizens' Relief Committee, which pays it out in strike benefits as directed by the Council. A soup line is conducted at two workmen's clubs, in the north and the south districts, on alternate days. I saw some 3,000 persons, mostly children, marching in line into the Washington Club, where each received a pail of hot soup, a loaf of bread, and each child a lollypop. Girls and boys herded groups of smaller fry past the soup kettles and bread counters. Occasionally a little girl, staggering under the weight of a baby, would put the infant down to toddle past the point of distribution, and gather him again to her bosom with soup and bread somehow attached. The lollypop in such cases constituted a problem in human engineering. I never saw a cleaner, healthier, more orderly crowd. In her children New Bedford has a treasure and a wardship. I defy anyone to see that soup line and not admit that there is nothing in the Merovingian titles of the shareholders, nothing in the profits and prestige of the Mayors of the Palace who act in their names, that can compare with the values of human life so beautifully and pathetically illustrated. New Bedford lost her whaling fleet with little actual suffering. More than a hundred thousand of her people, directly and indirectly, have all their little share in the good life dependent on the successful operation of the mills.

II

The sickness of the textile industry is, of course, not peculiar to New Bedford. Indeed, in consequence of the highly specialized character of its product, the city has yielded more slowly than other New England centers to the prevailing depression. That depression is due, broadly speaking, to declining consumption, owing to change in styles, and to overproduction stimulated by the War. But other American industries suffer such temporary setbacks, and American ingenuity overcomes them by combination of units, by efficiency of management, by advertising for a market. Why not the textile industry? One answer is the highly speculative basis on which the industry rests. The fluctuation in the prices of raw wool and cotton have been particularly violent during and since the War. In consequence of the bountiful crop of 1926, cotton went down to twelve cents; in 1928 it rose to twenty. Obviously a mill treasurer who guessed right on the market for raw material could make money with comparatively little attention to efficiency and economy in his plant. In other words, the ingenuity which in most industries goes into processes of production and sale, in textiles is largely replaced by guessing ability. In the packing industry, this speculative element has been held in check by combination, facilitated by the concentration of plants in Chicago, Kansas City and Omaha. In textiles, the wide distribution of mills in this country and abroad, dependent on the same sources of supply of raw materials, makes successful combination impossible. The largest efforts in this direction have not been encouraging. The shares of the American Woolen Company, which since its inception has been presided over by New Bedford textile men, William M. Wood and Andrew G. Pierce, fluctuate on the stock market

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

according to the size of its deficit. The New England Southern Mills Corporation has succeeded in reducing a number of previously successful units to the scrap heap. Financial power which in other industries shows its hand in combination, in the textiles, particularly in cotton, is expended in building new mills promoted by the manufacturers of machinery and by selling agencies.

These general conditions are emphasized in New Bedford by the character of the city which was formed in whaling days. Indeed, it is not altogether fanciful to find a similarity in the history of the two industries. The whaling industry, like the cotton industry, was highly speculative. It was dominated by owners, who outfitted ships, sold shares in the enterprise, and selected the captain, who had regularly a share. The owners were supreme; the captain was solely responsible to them. Often a successful captain was graduated into the owner class. The outside shareholders merely took what was handed to them. However it may have been in early times, today the cotton mills are dominated by a small group of "owners," by whom is appointed the captain, or treasurer, who buys the material, directs the mill and sells the product. The oldest mill, the Wamsutta, had a tradition of stockholders' direction. Gradually, through its administration of estates, the leading law firm of the city, Crapo, Clifford and Clifford, came into control. William W. Crapo (though he owned little of the stock) was president. Conspicuous ability developed and released by the industry could win for its possessor the superintendency of a mill, but hardly the treasurership. Such an ambition involved starting a mill with the backing of new capital. The Nield mill, I believe, owes its origin to this practice. Walter Langshaw started the Dartmouth mill in like circumstances. William M. Butler grew up as a poor boy in the city, and later injected his somewhat sour personality into the situation. Outside promoters entered the field, such as Whitman and Harding, who built the Whitman mill. Harding took over his partner's interests, and the firm of Harding and Tilton has promoted several mills of which it retained the selling agency. All of them have gone on the rocks, and the Whitman mill is now the object of a struggle between Harding and his stockholders, who have at last waked up to what has been done to them. Mr. Arthur Sharp is responsible for the Sharp mill. Mr. Sharp, as treasurer of the Hamilton Mills at Lowell, was tried and convicted for wrecking that property by financing on false inventories. This is a penitentiary offense, but Massachusetts justice let him off with a fine of fifty dollars, and enabled a group of insiders, of whom he was one, to take over the assets of the mill, including valuable water power and real estate in the heart of the city. The stockholders got nothing.

This system stimulates unhealthy competition through building new mills. It also results in keeping old mills in operation, even when they have to dump their goods on the market at less than cost, since it is to the interest of the officers to keep the works going under their salaried management. It is reported that some time ago the directors of the Fairhaven Company received an offer of $600 a share for the entire plant, which was not communicated to the stockholders. Fairhaven preferred is now quoted at five and one-half. But the profits of the insiders are not confined to salaries. Selling agencies get 4 percent on sales, whether the goods are produced at a loss or not. Mr. Butler controls the Quisset mill, which manufactures yarn, and sells it presumably to the Butler Manufacturing Company and the New Bedford Cotton Manufacturing Company at a profit, for the Quisset pays 5 percent on its shares. The Butler Manufacturing Company sells its output through Butler, Prentice and Company, who, it may be surmised, also make money. The Butler Manufacturing Company does not. It is quoted at thirty-five. The Pierce Manufacturing Company is on paper the most prosperous of all the New Bedford mills. It pays 24 percent and is quoted at $300; but Mr. Langshaw points out that its quick assets of $2,248,000 at interest earn at least $134,000 of the annual dividend of $144,000, and that for $10,000 the stockholders are taking a risk which Mr. Pierce's success with the American Woolen Company hardly warrants.

Walter Langshaw is the one "owner" in New Bedford who is not in the Manufacturers' Association, a rebel incarnate. His mill, the Dartmouth, is running and making money. In a long statement published in the New Bedford papers of August 10, he makes a full exposure of the situation dominated by graft and nepotism. In a chart representing all the companies in New Bedford, he shows their interlocking directorates, and fixes the control of the city's industry on four leading citizens. Of Mr. Andrew G. Pierce he says bluntly: "I cannot call to mind an instance where he has offered one new thought or idea in any branch of the textile business in association work." He remarks: "There are many who have been drawing salaries of from $10,000 to $25,000 a year as officials in the cotton manufacturing business whom I would pension, rather than have them in the employ of the Dartmouth Manufacturing Corporation." He raises a question in regard to the New Bedford Cotton Waste Company, of which Mr. A. G. Pierce is a director, as is also Mr. C. F. Broughton, treasurer of the Wamsutta, and which buys the waste of the mills controlled by these gentlemen. "Do these mills," he asks, "receive more for their waste than other mills who sell in the open market? If not, what is the motive? What are the salaries of the officers and directors?" In 1924 the paid-in capital of $5,000 of the New Bedford Cotton Waste Company supported a structure of notes payable of $296,000, of real estate and machinery of $55,000, and quick assets of $32,186. Mr. Lang-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shaw wonders if anyone outside the "little group" could obtain a loan of $350,000 on $5,000 capital.

The question which the workers ask is whether they are to bear in full the consequence of mismanagement for which the shareholders are responsible. They point out that the 10 percent cut in wages has no real meaning, because wages are extremely irregular throughout the industry, and are constantly subject to unofficial reduction. For example, in seven different mills in New Bedford the weaving price paid for broadcloth (128 x 68) varies from $1.08 to $1.64. Sometimes, owing to superior yarn furnished him, the weaver at the lower rate can work with greater rapidity and earn more than his co-worker at a higher one. The reader will surmise, and truly, that under conditions of management that obtain in New Bedford, the poorest yarn goes with the lowest price. Unofficial reductions take place when a weaver engaged on a certain construction at which he is making good pay is transferred to another, and his successor given a lower wage.

These reductions apply, of course, to skilled labor. The common labor of the mills is already at a point far below the living wage for families determined by the United States Department of Labor. The general cut of 10 percent falls most heavily on these last. It was a gesture of incompetence and defiance on the part of the present management. The workers have accepted the challenge. In an able document addressed to the shareholders they point out some forms of mismanagement already noted in this article, and the lack of industrial statesmanship on the part of the managers. The stockholders have suffered a loss of $68,000,000 in the shrinkage of the market value of their holdings. The workers have suffered a loss of $200,000 a week in wages, month after month, through short time and unemployment. They hold that neither loss was necessary, and they offer coöperation in the restoration of the industry. "There are able millmen in New Bedford," they say, "millmen we would be glad to follow, but who are not allowed to lead us now. If there were more of them, and they had more control, there would be no question of lower wages for us, or lower dividends for the investor." This is a plea for industrial democracy to which the shareholders of the mills should not be deaf. If they can do nothing to save the industry, common sense would suggest that they should allow others to try. If the workers are to be called on to shoulder the cost of mismanagement, it is common fairness to give them a chance to rectify it. This is the real question at issue. If the strikers win the restoration of the old wages, they win the responsibility of showing that they can be paid. And that being the case, every shareholder and every friend of New Bedford should wish them success.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

The Somewhat Happy Warrior

ON THE fateful evening of the twenty-second of August, Elmer Durkin, fulfilling an engagement of long standing, sloshed through the rain-washed streets of Woppington and pressed the button over Dr. Horner's name.

"A swell night for a murder, Doc," said the newsdealer.

"The assassination of the Grand Old Party is about to begin." There was a look of holy joy upon the face of the elderly physician. To Elmer this was just a night off, but to the battered old Democrat it was a crowded hour of glorious life. "I'm afraid you've missed the opening exercises."

"Horseshoes for me! Those prelims are always pretty hammy."

"What do you say, Elmer? Let's nullify our constitutions just once."

"You're on." It was the least one could do for an old friend in his moment of bliss.

The quaint nullification ceremony was performed, the rain splashed the windows of the doctor's house, a flicker in the fireplace defied the evening chill. Now from the elegant six-tube triumph came a raucous hullaballoo and the blare of the sidewalks song. Horner turned his better ear toward Albany and every wistful, waning whisker stood tiptoe with expectancy.

While the Smithian words snapped through the cosmos, the old doctor sat in silent worship.

"Great is Al-lah," thought Elmer.

"What a man!" exclaimed Horner when the speech was over.

"The boy is there," Elmer admitted. "When he kicks loose from that mess of junk they wished on him at Houston he's a wow. That's a bobble you Dumbocrats always pull; you pick a guy to run and then tie his dogs so he can't. Maybe that's how come you poor old skates spend so much of your life in the breadline. They say Al has a nifty memory, but if he's a wise guy he'll forget Houston and roll his own. I'm not crabbing your act, old thing, I'm just yammering for a higher Al content."

"What a speech," exclaimed the infatuated doctor.

"Smith's line on foreign questions and disarmament has got Hoover all shaded. H. H. is supposed to be all hepped up on European topics, but he listened to me more like the main sneeze of West Branch, Iowa. Al's spiel on Nicaragua had a big kick for me and then the next thing I knew he had stopped speaking his mind and started speaking a piece. The platform cramped his style on immigration, prohibition and farm relief. When he's sinking the harpoon into the crooks, he's the w. k. happy warrior, but when he's teetering on that crummy tariff plank he makes a noise like a sappy lawyer. That goes for the hooch question, too. No-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

body could call him a pussyfooter, because it takes all kinds of nerve to throw the hooks into the Eighteenth Commandment and clamor for the state sale of liquor. But all the time that strict enforcement plank is poking ragged holes in his system.

"I'll say he made a bum out of that phoney economy and fake tax relief and half of 1 percent prosperity those Goptimists have been feeding us. I know most guys pass out if the talk goes over sixty smackers, but Al's got a gift for making big round numbers sound like snappy stories. He could sell us on that if there was more time, but I'd say he's about a year late with the kickoff. Simps who have been believing in Santa Cal so long can't be wised up between this and the big choose-day in November. That's a break for Herbert. He doesn't have to make sense; he just keeps school with Coolidge.

"If you ask me," Elmer went on (though nobody had), "his hottest dope was on water power. There's no misleading strings tied on him there and he sure knows his delicatessen. He jabs a mean left hook to the power trust and it's the sweet old sound of the knuckle on the beezer that's been such good music in York State. That will coax a rah-rah out of us grads of dear old La Follette, 1924. You know, doc, we batted around five million for Battle Bob. We didn't bunch our bingles enough to annoy the box score any, but now we're all dolled up with no place to go. If the Governor can vamp the loose Progressives and the grumpy South and the standpat, but thirsty East, he can slip Hoover the sour news."

About this time it began to dawn upon the garrulous newsdealer that his remarks had made no dent upon his host's mind.

"Poor old Hoover!" Horner had now adopted his popular bedside manner. "At any other time he might have pulled through. He's all right in famine and flood, but he's no match for a human cyclone."

A little more quiet talk, another slight fracture of the noble experiment, then Elmer went out and leaned against the rain.

"I wouldn't"—these were the closing words of the mellow and tolerant old doctor—"I wouldn't turn a *Republican* out on a night like this."

Elmer carried in his memory the face of a happy mortal. It was not the illicit beverage which brought the flush of youth to Dr. Horner's withered cheek, or the little blaze on the hearth which warmed his ancient bones. It was that inner fire which Al Smith somehow has the power to kindle in the breasts of men. FELIX RAY.

Russia—Europe—America

The Re-Discovery of America: XX

I

ALL truths to the eye of the egoist are paradox; for truth contains all aspects of an event and the eye fixed to one cannot admit the others. Thus the truth that the destiny of the American nation depends on the life of groups; that an America striving to be uniform will remain formless, but that American groups striving to realize themselves will realize America. Thus the truth that man and men are real only as they live the Whole, and that the Whole is real only as it is lived by men and by man.

These words will be read by a person; even if they are read aloud in a group, always the person will receive them. Therefore I reserve the practical essence of our problem—the problem of the person—to the last: I wish to close face to face with my reader. Before that, there remains yet one penultimate matter: the question of public issues as they effect the forming of our group. . . . Of course, with its transfiguring definitions, the group will not feel the antithesis of private and public, of personal and external. The difference between them will be one merely of *limitation of action*. As the group becomes more knowing (in its sense of knowledge as organic action), its immediate deed will spread to include behavior in the kind of issue called public. This does not mean that it will necessarily "go into politics" or "effect social reforms." In order to be clear within itself, it will have an attitude toward social problems, for it will constantly find that its most private life adumbrates to the outside world and that the outside world challenges its own life. By solving these problems, moreover, it will absorb the life that they contain; and thereby grow toward truer wholeness. Public issues are the medium wherein the group will win that sense of limitations without which it cannot achieve wholeness. The true self (personal or group) is a focus of the whole. It overcomes its false and absolute selfhood by growing aware of the outer world. This field of "opposition" provides the means whereby it can absorb into its own experience the life that transcends its focus.[1] That is why great issues make great men and join men greatly together.

[1] This is the right approach to the problem of suffering and evil. Adversity, by imposing limits upon self, enables the self to transcend these limits by spiritual assimilation of what opposes it. Of course, if the opposing element is destroyed, it is not assimilated,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

II

There are many such issues. I select three because they seem to me of so general and deep a challenge that the American of whatever mind and temper is bound to find that they have touched him: so that they should be admirable means for self-search and for union among men. They are the problem of Soviet Russia with its allied question of the economic order; the problem of Latin America as a phase of the American Whole, and the problem of a hostilely receding Europe.

A. Unless all the empiric philosophers are wrong, from Aristotle to Karl Marx, we may assume it true that political power follows property. Indeed, to deny this is an antiquated dualism not much wiser than the old occasionalism which put a barrier between thought and action and then invented an external God to harness them together. Property is economic force, and so is government. So long as the struggle for food and the home absorbs mankind, government will be its weapon and its guerdon; political action will be the conflict, more or less disguised, for property-power. To free government from servitude to wealth, there is but one first step: man must be freed from a servitude to wealth. This means that man must be freed from the *pursuit* of wealth; that wealth must become common. It does not follow that each man's personal belongings will be less private than his own breath is private. The common things, indeed, are the most personal. Man will simply no more be permitted to compete for the needs of his belly, even as today he cannot compete for the needs of his lungs. Only then will government and culture be liberable into channels of the mind.

There is in Russia a government which professes this truth. How so practical a truth has come to be merged with mysticism by a famished people, how it may grow to be religion for all the empty stomachs of Asia (till they are full), is not our affair. Nor how close the program comes or will come to fulfillment; nor how profoundly the rulers of Russia are working toward it. That is Russia's destiny, and we may follow Russia, according to our lights, with hope or with fear. The sole duty of our group would be to avow the sanctity of the Soviet profession, the universal value of the Soviet experiment: to keep our hands off and to help with reverent respect.

For this experiment is crucial. It is nothing less than the attempt to raise the base of human life above the nutritive. The animal expends its energy in the business of personal or race nutrition. Mankind is still an animal. The man who boasts that all his time goes into business is the equal of the cow, all of whose time goes into grazing. The nation that solemnly asserts of time that it is money, and that plots, prays, breathes in the obsession of acquiring wealth is a pack of wolves on the hunt. And its idealization of this servitude to the belly into a kind of "service" is as hideous a spectacle as that of any brute, worshiping its lust.

The tradition of the human masses living to eat has given this outrageous value to the winning of food—finally to the mechanics of winning food even when food was not needed; and to the symbol of power to win food. What man did with his power was of no importance. America, indeed, has proved that the lust for this power can become entirely dissociate from the need of food, without slackening in madness. For the Americans do not starve, yet are enslaved no less to an idolatry whose roots are starvation—the idolatry of possession and of gain.

And now in Russia, a race of genius rises from this base of servitude. Not we, not France and England, have risen from it. Less honestly but no less really than Greece and Rome, we are slave empires. And our masters, looking at this dawn of man in Moscow, buckle their swords, summon their legions. I do not know what is actually happening in Russia. I have read enough books, spoken with enough visitors and natives, to allow my ignorance. I doubt not, the Russian is still human: is still, as are we, a pitiful, wayward creature, sunk in violence. The point is, that he is working at a *method* to bring about what men have always professed. And this is holy work: this is a Cause and a soil for those who need a concrete thing to fight for. The business of our group would be of course to plough its own fields; and its ways, like the fields, will not be Russian. But if our State threatened the peace of the high experiment in Russia, it would be the group's business to fight for it—to fight for the truth, no matter how close to home were the lie.

B. Herbert Croly has pointed out that the defense by American liberals of Mexican sovereignty is really self-defense. If the mass power of the American jungle wipes out the variety of life in Mexico that interferes with the beatitudes of oil, it is plain that kindred life in our own country must share the same fate. A greed that can destroy the "enemy" abroad can destroy it at home. This thought is a clue to the coöperation we must achieve with America Latina[1] for the sake of our own

---

and there is no growth. This same paradox of boundaries leads to the problem of infinite and finite. Only a consciousness falsely separating itself (as finite) from the whole could have invented the unreal antithesis of infinite. Neither finite nor infinite exists; both are dependent on the unreal assumption of an absolute separation; and neither can be known, for they arise alike out of the false fixations of "self" or of "objects" within the whole. The religion which speaks of infinite God assumes the childishly separate and finite self. The mathematics that treats of infinite space, etc., is also rudimentary and anthropomorphic.

[1] What could be more symbolic of our embryonism than the fact that we lack *even names?* What is our America? Even the conglomerate phrase United States is not exclusively ours. And the other America? To call it Latin-America, Indo-America, Ibero-America, or severally Mexico, Central America, South America, is equally inadequate. Only America is a good name; and prophetically it covers us all. I shall use the term America Latina as a reluctant convenience. Let it not be forgotten that America Latina is even less latin than America Sajona (as they sometimes call us) is saxon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

skins: it is a practical threshold to the profound, shamefully neglected truth of our linked destiny with our southern brothers.

We know nothing about them: know not the heroes of their independence, the builders of their domains, the writers of their epics, the makers of their arts, the cultivators of their craft, the educators of their chaotic, potent peoples.[1] Our ignorance cheats their impulse to know us. A document called the Monroe Doctrine, pronounced a century ago when Europe was a menace and the American nations were embryons or newborn—a document, that is to say, which applies to no condition that is not dead, stands between them and us. Its impertinence to the facts is a symbol of our indifference to the spirit and human values south of the Rio Grande. It is a mechanism riling to America Latina and obfuscating to ourselves. A kindred mechanism of escape from facing truth is our insistence on regarding these American nations as mere *political* units. Politically, many of them are weak; and our dwelling on this and our ignorance of their *peoples,* confirms our lordly blindness. But their political instability is a negative issue of their ethos. They are peoples quick to ally impulse, ideal and act. Therefore, since they are new they are full of ferment; their lack of political molds is a feature of their promise. It is because their politics is quick with life that it has not become a rigid and empty and indifferent dumb show, like our own.

They are peoples rich in plastic genius; pregnant with ideal impulse. They have a deep sense of destiny and the persistent strain of the mystic tradition is wide in their lands. No less than we, they love Whitman, Thoreau, Emerson and Poe; and to these add names of their own which we ignore. Mystic America has become, in their crafts and in their letters, an organic undertaking. They struggle above barriers of mountains and of economic weakness to come close together. And it is not unlikely that this generation, with the aeroplane to help, will bring about their cultural union. It will be a symphony of voices from Mexico to Tierra del Fuego; for the variety of their cities is great and, in Plato's sense, they have the music.

With a wilfulness that is touching, these people desire to love the North Americans. They respect our genius; they read our authors; they learn from our great technicians. They want to love us, because they are learning from us. They struggle at home against the anti-yankee jingoes whose hands we strengthen and whose empty mouths we fill with justified abuse. Constructive America Latina is often alone in furthering *our* great tradition. For we, instead of working with them, leave the word to the diggers of oil and to diggers' diplomatic servants.

If we knew these Americans, we should know more of ourselves; for they have the heart of the matter—the creating an American world that shall be more than the grave of Europe. This is the essence of our wholeness with them. Here, then, is another practical issue upon which our group might act. It might work for the undermining of that historic symbol of our impertinence—the Monroe Doctrine, through the upholding of a true doctrine of American union. It might foment American relations, not with governments, but through governments with peoples; relations of life and art, not of mere political and mercantile technique. Our business with South America will rest on a sound basis when it represents negotiations not between strangers, but between brothers.[1]

C. America Latina returns us to Europe. From the agony of the Christian Republic, it rose also, and what we have said of the "last days" and of "the grave" of Europe may, with variations due to the peculiar status of Portugal and Spain, be referred to our southern brothers. The point for us to note is that in both new continents there lived at once new elements making America a life positive and germinally apart from Europe. Climate, geography, the primeval forest, the transformed Indian and Negro, the new mixtures of old races, Asiatic, African and Caucasian, were a fresh substance in this chaos, bound to make our Order—when it comes—an individual world.

But if the Americas are, with these reserves, products of the Christian dissolution, there is still a third: modern Europe itself. In recent years, much has been said abroad of the growing threat of Europe's "Americanization."[2] When this word is employed by Europeans, it refers always specifically to the traits of the American Jungle and of its cults of Power. Personal will, the machine, herd-democracy, levelling from below, industrialization, regimentation, property-worship, materialism, etc., are taken as American and as an external danger to the spirit of Europe. But we have seen that all these traits are products of Europe's breaking; that they are shreds and fragments from Europe's energic Whole. If their prevalence in a land is to be known as its Americanization, Americanization is a process of the decay of Europe. Americanization is a disease of Europe. Americanization is a disease naturalized in America by men of European

[1] This past year, José Vasconcelos, whose cultural work among the Mexican Indians and whose writings on the American spirit have given him renown throughout the Spanish-speaking world, has been in our country lecturing at the University of Chicago. He is a great Mexican, and a great American. What honor did we accord him?

[1] On such a sound basis, I do not mean that we should make more money in our dealing with South America. There is no doubt that the less humanly and wholly you know a man, the more cash you can get out of him. That is why, if our real value continues to be profit, all the good-will protestations in the world will not increase our understanding, against our commercial instinct that understanding is a drawback to "good business." But, of course, a lucrative relationship is not always a safe and sound one.

[2] The best portrait of this Americanization of the old world, of which I know, is in Anatole France's "Ile des Pingouins."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stock and European culture. Americanization has been brought to other countries also. South America has caught it from the same source; and Russia and Asia are not free of it. But its first home is not America at all. Americanization is rife in the center whose rotting spread it: England, Germany, France . . .[1]

There are deep differences, of course. In the Americas, Americanization is refracted by the essential genius of our lands and by the transplanting of the mystic Mediterranean tradition. Yet, for reasons we have studied, this complex process spread more unimpeded in our world, and with us became the fact. That is why it is fair to call it Americanization; and to know it by its essential name: the disease of Power. In Europe, Americanization has another kind of energy. The rotted culture of the European peoples no longer satisfies. Yet it is there, and impedes the Americanizing process. The organic memory of Christendom is still so vital at its center that it depletes the career of the lusting atomic will. Europe's great past is no longer valid, yet it has not been transcended. From this disequilibrium comes a deep dissatisfaction—a longing for the end of the past. One end is Americanization. Americanization, therefore, because it is impeded, has the value in Europe of an unattained ideal.

Europe combats this menace by proposing a new Whole of Europe, to replace the lost Body of Christ. The tradition of *conscious Europeanism* may be conveniently dated from Goethe. Goethe had been nourished by Spinoza. His visioned Europe was a microcosmic Whole: a profound pantheism gave it value; it was both rational and naturalistic. But the world around this man was dissolving. The dualistic times worked against his message. Goethe himself was parcelled *seriatim* into love poet, nature poet, poet of Faust, man of science, dreamer of a synthetic Europe. His mystic essence was segregated in his verse; his constructions of organic form were carefully divided between his biology and his politics. Hegel, who began so well, confused the Prussian State and Church with the Spinozistic Substance. Marx plotted his Whole on the dispirited logic of economics. Nietzsche unified Europe, by making it the matrix for individual Power. Goethe was a great disciple of Spinoza; there was no great disciple of Goethe.

Today, the project of a new Whole of Europe is a pitiful shrinking from the universal concept of a Christian Whole which once held Stockholm to Seville. It is a skeletal affair (in a tradition that is dead, as with any other body, the bones last longest). Chiefly, it is defensive: defensive against the inner signs of death, and defensive against the births to the East and the West—against Russia and America. (Compare its deliberate process with the tide of morning life that once swept man from Ireland to Bucharest.) The conscious member of the Mediterranean Whole at its height thought of himself, not first as French or European, but as Christian; Europe and France were afterthoughts. The modern European is a member of a country, who rationalizes Europe. The most common symbol of his mind is the League of Nations. If he is wiser than that, and understands the need of an inspiriting principle to give Europe life, he turns pathetically back to Rome, or east to India or Russia. But even so, he is moved less by love than by fear or calculation: and only love makes wholes.

Speculation on the chances of some such transfiguring force coming again into Europe is not quite outside the compressed province of these pages. We have seen that the Whole called Christian Europe had a Mediterranean heart. It was not Atlantic at all. As the gravity of the Body shifted to the open waters from the Inner Sea, the Body began to break. The Atlantic in Europe was chiefly a force of dissent and dissolution. This does not mean that Jew, Greek, North African and Roman were higher types of man than the Nordic. It means that their culture was achieved; whereas an Atlantic culture of which the North European races may be leader has not yet reached a synthesis at all. Ere it could, the Atlantic needed to be bounded by the discovery of the Pacific, even as the Mediterranean was bounded by the discovery of the Atlantic. The question is, which side of the *new* Inner Sea —the Atlantic—will be the heart of the new Whole? Destiny points to the Americas. For four centuries, Europe and Spain have been creating us with the wreckage of themselves: this, as we have seen, is the essence of the work of modern genius, in discovery, in invention, in philosophy and in art. Here in the Americas have been developed the ideology and the technology of Europe. Here, from Massachusetts to Chile, has been lodged the germinal seed of the Mediterranean Body—the mystic tradition. And here, in our transfiguring sky, in our new earth, in our new race, is the Womb to receive it. When Egypt, Phoenicia, Crete put forth Greece, they had done; when Israel and Greece put forth Alexandria, they had done; when Hellenism put forth Rome and Byzance, it had done. Of course, history does not repeat itself; a series of vague similitudes is not a law. As Islam the hot tribes of the Desert, it may be that some fresh force will make a Form of Europe. But even if this is not its destiny, Europe is bound for many generations after its declining (as once Greece) to produce intellect and art superior to ours. Even a decayed maturity is more clever and more able than a dawning life. Life, indeed, when it is deep begins too far below the levels of articulation to be clever until it is mature; (the smart elements in the Americas are the surface discards). It is safe

[1] Holding the term to its ingredients as we examined them in "The American Jungle" and the subsequent chapters, we see that the most enormous instance of Americanism is the career of Napoleon. For the peculiar role of Spain in this process see "Virgin Spain."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to say, whatever the new whole of Europe—solely defensive or again creative—that it will produce statesmen, scientists, writers, artists, thinkers who, through sheer excellence, will threaten to dominate the world: and if Americanization prospers in the land of its birth, Europe will also give us technical, mercantile and financial masters beside whom our Rockefellers, Fords and Morgans will be as children. Americanized or purely defensive, Europe will be hostile to us. Re-created by new spiritual life, Europe will be different from us and through its superior mental skill it will be a dangerous temptation to our unformed nature. That is why America must understand Europe, to be free of Europe; must cultivate its own garden lest it be overrun.

If our America proceeds in its Americanization, as we have defined the term, there will be certain issues. South America, feeling itself threatened in its integrity and variety of union (like Mexico and the Caribbean, already) will grow hostile. It will consolidate against us, it will join Europe against us—for Europe carefully sues the South. Our dangers will be doubled, and our promise halved; we shall soon find ourselves alone, with a bristling world about us. But this will not be the worst. America Latina, in self-defense, will follow us in Americanization. Those Southern powers (perhaps Argentina and Brazil) most capable of coping with the imperialism of the North on its own terms will develop them at home: Americanization will dominate America Latina and destroy the promise there. We shall have an enemy at home, younger and more expansive even than ourselves. For Americanization is a disease which must disappear, either by our mastery of it or by its mastery of us. If it spreads, the white man will go down. Possibly the sun will rise on a Chinese world, from which this scourge has scourged itself away.

But if our America resists Americanization, if we follow the mystic and not the practical tradition, if we become a symphonic nation led by our conscious units and not a blind mass Storm whelming the world in our efficient darkness—if we choose Love and not Power, life and not death, then, too, there will be certain issues. America Latina will join us. For this is her destiny, and all her life yearns toward it. In this process of creation, there will be two Persons: we perhaps the male, America Latina perhaps the female. She cannot take the first step: she is too much the Responder. This does not mean that she is weak—any more than woman is weak. If we strike her in Power, she will find ways to arm and to destroy us. If we meet her in love, she will help to fulfill us. There will then be America, in the world. If Europe proves hostile, there will be America to stand whole against Europe. And if Europe proves creative and receptive (the more likely issue), there will be America to return good for good—to nurture Europe. Already the spirit of Europe, personified by its great men, turns to us not in self-defense but with the open heart of need. For the America which lies between Arctic and Antarctic, between Europe, Africa and Asia, is fabulous in spirit and in strength. It is Ophir and it may be Zion. If its wealth is not consumed into the ash of Power, it will be a sun for the world of men.

This disease of Power which it is fair to call Americanization can be overcome alone by us. We did not create it, but we have perfected it. With us it is virulent fact; in Europe and the rest of the world it is still a morbid aspiration. You can neither fight a dream nor study it. But a fact can be studied, a fact can be fought. The issue of the world is the issue of the American fact.

III

Practically, as we have seen, all these great causes are the issue of the group. Only the compact and actionable integer of the group can hope to transfigure, from within, the American fact. But the essence of the group is the person. The issue of the world lies therefore in the heart of the American person. Not until we have men who look so close within themselves that they shall find there the issue of the world, is there hope for the world; not until we have men who pierce the golden lie of the world in order to dwell in the truth, will the world again live truly.

WALDO FRANK.

(The final chapter of "The Re-Discovery of America," entitled "Beginning. . . ." will appear in our issue of September 26.)

Lethe

Ah, drink again
This river that is the taker-away of pain,
And the giver-back of beauty!

In these cool waves
What can be lost?—
Only the sorry cost
Of the lovely thing, ah, never the thing itself!

The level flood that laves
The hot brow
And the stiff shoulder
Is at our temples now.

Gone is the fever,
But not into the river;
Melted the frozen pride,
But the tranquil tide
Runs never the warmer for this,
Never the colder.

Immerse the dream.
Drench the kiss.
Dip the song in the stream.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Notes

THE word runs around that within a short time—perhaps before this piece can be printed—an announcement described by his friends as of "great political importance" will be made by Mr. William G. McAdoo of Washington and Santa Barbara. For quite some time now, I have been laboring under the belief that nothing Mr. McAdoo could say would be of any political importance at all. With many others, I formed this opinion last May, right after the California primaries in which the "Happy Warrior" (some smart Republicans before the campaign is over will make Al sorry his well meaning friend ever pinned that title on him) brutally put the boots to the aged and fragile forms of James A. Reed and Thomas J. Walsh. Among other things, the result not only ended Mr. McAdoo's chance of going to the Houston convention, but ended his political career.

I still think that what he says or does will not be particularly vital, but it was a mistake to consider it altogether unimportant, and at least it will be interesting. There are certainly no large numbers of voters anywhere waiting for Mr. McAdoo to make up their minds for them, but none the less, there will be a certain psychological effect in a statement from him. And at this stage of the game psychology is important. Hence I await with interest the forthcoming pronouncement from one who was fondly referred to by his enthusiastic agents in 1924 as "The Twentieth Century Andrew Jackson." What the nature of the McAdoo pronouncement will be, I am unable to predict. Some of his former lieutenants—most of them, in fact—have already fallen into line for the Happy Warrior, hating it like the devil, suffering, sweating and swearing—and not always privately.

Other dear friends of this noble and unfortunate man have fallen, not into, but out of line, and are supporting the dry Herbert with earnestness and fervor, alleging that the Happy Warrior repudiated his party platform and thus removed the obligation of support resting upon all "decent Democrats." The general expectation is that while the McAdoo heart may be with the latter, he will join the former class of his friends—in other words, that he will do a Nick Butler. And that is the thing for which in my artless way I am ardently praying. It will make the perfect situation. On the one side Dr. Butler, heart and soul against Herbert, vibrating in every fleshy fiber with enthusiasm for the wet Al, yet held in line for the Republican ticket by some queer quirk in his mental make-up, utterly unexplainable in a man of his type.

On the other side will be Mr. McAdoo, with his whole nature revolted by the nomination of Smith, the most cordially detested of all his political enemies, and outraged by the brazen delivery of the Democratic party to the "liquor interests" by the "Tammany crowd," yet kept from jumping the last ditch by a number of more or less curious reasons. One of these is, of course, an inherent party regularity, the desire to preserve which never leaves a certain type in which it is born. Another is the fact that, while everybody else recognizes that Mr. McAdoo's chances for the presidency are all dead and decently buried, Mr. McAdoo himself does not believe them beyond resurrection. No one who has once actively aspired to the presidency can ever quite bring himself to believe that. And there are other reasons. In any event, if Mr. McAdoo, on his side of the party fence, following the example of Dr. Butler, will jump all the barriers except the last, it will add vastly to the color of the campaign.

Speaking of Mr. McAdoo calls to mind those two New York financial angels of his 1924 campaign—Bernard M. Baruch and Thomas L. Chadbourne. Beyond question their support meant a lot to the McAdoo cause, and it is interesting to know where and how they are lining up this time. Of Baruch there is no question—he is strong for the Happy Warrior, just as strong for him now as he was against him before. Though he is still in Europe he will be back early in September, I am told, and plans to take an active part in the Smith campaign. The idea of the Smith managers is that Baruch can most effectively help the much advertised swing of the agricultural leaders of the Middle and Far West toward Al. Inasmuch as it is generally understood that Mr. Baruch has, for a considerable number of years past, financially assisted various schemes for the benefit of the farmers in those sections, I have no doubt his aid in the direction indicated will be worth while. Anyhow, I am informed he is keen to give it, in this or any other way. I am further told that the warmth of his support of the Happy Warrior will be considerably increased by a strong personal distaste for Herbert, conceived during the War, when both were important factors in the Wilson war machine at Washington.

It is curious how many persons of prominence the mild-mannered Herbert, in his inoffensive way, has managed not to please. Others who come to mind include the Hon. Edward B. McLean and the Hon. Harry M. Daugherty. I do not know whether either or both of these exponents of the higher life are supporting Herbert, but if they are, the anguish they suffer will make the McAdoo-Butler pangs seem merely pleasant little pin pricks. Then there are the heroic Secretary of State, Mr. Kellogg and Mr. William Wallace Atterbury, who is mixing—and not felicitously—politics and the railroad business in Pennsylvania. Mr. Kellogg and Mr. Atterbury are, of course, supporting Herbert and heartily, but they are not happy, not by many miles. A strained, hunted look comes into their eyes when they mention the Hoover name—and this in spite of the fact that Mr. Atterbury beat everybody else at getting back from Kansas City to pledge his allegiance to Herbert personally.

As to the second of those 1924 McAdoo angels, the Greek-goddish Mr. Chadbourne, with his giant frame and swollen fortune, my information is that he is distinctly not in line as yet for Al. It is true that soon after 1924, at a time when Baruch was not friendly at all, Chadbourne and Al became warm personal friends. But something happened and a break came. Friends of Chadbourne say that in the end he will come around and everything will be all right. Friends of Al say it does not make much difference whether he does or not.

Washington. T. R. B.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Three Poems

Rain Winds Blow Doors Open

Dreaming of grips at her heart
She asked in a sleep and between sleeps,
"What is mercy and why am I asking mercy?"

The doors in her dreams opened
And a rain wind blew in the doorway
And treetops moaned under footsteps over.

Dreaming of a road running off
Into the roads gone crossways on the sky,
She shook in a dream and cried between sleeps,
"How many miles, how many days, how many years?"

The strips of the sun
Spelled a name on the floor in the morning.
She tried to spell out the name, the letters.
"A rain wind blows in the doorway," she said,
"And a road goes crossways on the sky," she said,
"And the night lets nobody know how many miles, how many days, how many years."

On a Railroad Right of Way

Stream, go hide yourself.
In the tall grass, in the cat tails,
In the browns of autumn, the last purple asters, the yellow whispers.
On the moss rock's levels leave the marks of your wave-lengths.
Sing in your gravel, in your clean gully.
Let the moaning railroad trains go by.
Till they stop you, go on with your song.

The minnies spin in the water gravel,
In the spears of the early autumn sun.
There must be winter fish.
Babies, you will be jumping fish
In the first snow month.

Bitter Summer Thoughts No. XXII

Quicker and Easier

The billboards and the street car signs told the people,
"Say it with flowers," and those who could buy flowers
And who knew no other way of saying found themselves
In the habit of saying it with flowers.
Men whose personal fragrance had no special whiff
Of fresh air, clean dirt, and growing things,
Found it easier to telephone the florist
And say it with flowers—quicker and easier.

YES, SAY IT WITH FLOWERS!

Women rather wear flowers than no flowers.
Gift flowers never tell where they came from.
A woman's flowers ought to whisper she has secrets worth hearing told.
If a woman tells a man, "Send me no flowers," that is the end.
All women try to guess who would send an armful of roses for the coffin if one dies, if one has a funeral, if all one's friends know there is a funeral.
Each woman knows what one flower she would wear if called on to wear a flower at a wedding tomorrow.

CARL SANDBURG.

Encaustics

ALTOONA DON JUAN

J—— is the cousin of some of my oldest friends and I have asked him to lunch with me today at Marcelle's for their sakes, though I have known him a long time and like him well enough, I suppose. He landed only this morning on the Ile de France, from a sort of six weeks' pilgrimage that he has been making to the scene of his bravery, gallantry and sin, ten years ago when he was a decorated ace, and is now on his way home to Altoona.

He is fairly tall, sunburned from golf, with a naturally good figure somewhat neglected and in the middle sagged out from too much liquor the year round. His teeth are strong and white, his forehead ruddy. His hair looks hot on his head.

J—— is telling me about his trip as he eats his lunch. It is a good lunch, with eggs bénédictine and perfect ravioli, romaine and other delights; but I watch in some dismay as J—— fires it down. The egg over which such labor had been expended, under that precise savor of its famous sauce, has just slipped down as if it had been taken raw, as at the sanitariums, or had been a capsule to be used, but not enjoyed; the salad might have been mere forage; the whole purpose and end of eating might have been only dispatch or a mere stoking of the body's engines. And yet I knew long ago that J—— hates plain food in plain places.

Before this on several occasions J—— has told me of his conquests in the Altoona neighborhood among debutantes and married ladies. Mere professional prostitution interests him not at all; it must be barriers shattered, fortresses carried, adventure, risk and dominance. I have long known that in his mind the whole fair sex is to be won, frailty thy name is indeed woman, and have concluded that J—— proves this case for himself by never giving a second thought to a woman in whom this probability of vanquishment is not implied. Such society would only bore him; and since it bores him, does not therefore exist, which proves his point, no doubt. Certainly in Paris during his years of the War his record in the air was rivalled by that in boudoirs; he has regaled many of us with those victories, and left us the impression that he has only to return to France for this part of the War at least to wage again. This was no boasting on his part, but a sincere belief; on this trip he meant to look up all the ladies of his past and to turn his coming back into a calendar of Venus' trophies.

It has all turned out the other way, the pilgrimage has been wholly virginal. He looked up these former friends of his, but all of them seemed cold or difficult, he got

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nowhere. He has been trying to think it over, and has decided what was the matter. For these foreign women he went too fast. They wanted more approach, more leading up, they wanted to make an art of these love affairs, and he was too speedy and impatient.

There is something pathetic about it when J—— tells you this. You cannot say to him that of course we are all ten years older than we were ten years ago, and he not so dapper and trim as that young officer was in those glamorous days; nor can you add that the supremacies of Altoona do not tend to preserve that care and perfection of figure and turning out that makes for Parisian effects. These old flames of his did not find him quite the same. And yet in some blurred way he has hit, I am sure, on a fair degree of explanation for his failures.

I watch J—— with his veal, see him clearing it away and the sauce and capers with it, and then putting his knife and fork in place, as he wheels to his coffee. It would be hard for any Continental, much less the ladies, to understand this speed toward an objective that makes so little sense when you leave out all the *nuance,* all the flavor, all the music; they would wonder what this energetic child thought life was about, and where he thought he was going.

Little Royalty

B—— comes of a good enough old New York family, but one that lost its money some time ago, and his mother has had to teach all her life in the public schools. I saw her once when she came to a Harvard Commencement to see her son graduated, a little plump woman in a chip straw hat, white, with white leaves around it, and a white lawn dress that touched your heart with its efforts to appear festive for her son's sake on very little money; all the money had gone on his college expenses. After Harvard, B—— had gone to Columbia on a scholarship in social science and economics. From there he passed two years later into an excellent position in a Philadelphia bank, partly because of his scholarly record, partly because one of the directors was the father of his chum at college. That was six months ago.

Not long ago I met B—— and he was smiling at an incident that had just befallen him. Word had come down from above that information was wanted as to whether in New York State trains were required by law to blow the whistle when they approached a bridge. Did New York trains always blow for a bridge? Reason would tell you that they did, perhaps, but nobody around seemed to be wholly certain about it. Did they in Pennsylvania? But if so, that proved nothing absolutely. He had not known quite what the matter was that needed this piece of statistics. It was his business to look it up; it was an opportunity to show what he could do, the kind of report that he could supply. He spent three evenings getting all the data together and putting into shape the items that might be of importance, and then handed in his report. He learned then that the five-year-old son of the president had been building a track for his electric train, and wanted to make himself a route over several states.

This information had so astonished B—— that he had forgotten now, he said, whether the trains in New York did blow legally or did not blow when they came to a bridge.

As he tells me this I am watching B—— to see, if I can, what he thinks of this event and this use of his researches, trained to such scholarly efficiency at two universities. I perceive that it implies nothing much at all to him. He takes the whole business as a matter of course, a social order outside our private criticism, and to be accepted as if it were the natural state in which we live and move. The little boy belongs to our princely class.

Subway Couple

It is impossible not to feel the pencil coming down from your brain into your hand, seeing them thus before you in the subway. You feel that you must draw line on line of words, and establish for yourself this delicious piece of *genre.*

They have taken the subway at South Ferry, but surely have arrived by way of the New York, New Haven and Hartford; there is something about the gray color of this chalk that, far back in your mind, you choose to draw them with, that tells you that. At first you wonder on what section of the seat they are sitting, those regular divisions appear to be discounted. Then you discover that he is on one half of one division and she on one half of the next, and that in the space between, where the metal dividing strip comes, there seem to be two bodies in eclipse.

They are both the same height, just below medium, both not plump, but not thin, both gray-haired and around fifty-five perhaps. The man has sallow skin and a lead-colored mouth that turns down at the corners, under a small gray moustache. The woman has brown skin, white hair and a mouth that looks as if she were about to whistle, as she keeps twisting and biting her lips. His eyes are the color of his lips; hers are gray, strangely accurate and determined, direct and empty. Then you discover that what is happening about the seat is that she is sitting with her shoulder and arm in front of his, popping herself ahead as if to manage matters. Her arms seem to stick out rather curiously, you do not know whether she has laced herself up a little too tight under the arms, or whether she started with a small, close skeleton that could properly articulate its parts only when under the thinnest padding. She moves away from him. Now, you say, she realizes that she crowds her husband and wishes to give him room. But no, she opens a tabloid paper, which lay on the next seat, and shoots it out to where her eyes can focus properly, through those large rimless glasses. He reads a paper also. She puts the paper down, and he stops reading. She shakes herself and settles again, halfway across the front of him once more. She turns her head back and forth as if we were passing a great many stations and most of her life had hitherto been filled with catching the right station, so that things will go safely. Her neck is rather taut, her eyelids are batting rapidly, her lips are pressed together and pursed out, pressed in, pursed out. You begin to think she could turn her head all the way round. She adjusts her shoulders quickly, and looks as if she were going to sprout.

Stark Young.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

City Room and Squared Circle

Gentlemen of the Press, by Ward Morehouse. Henry Miller's Theater, August 27.

Ringside, by Edward E. Paramore, Jr., Hyatt Daab and George Abbott. The Broadhurst Theater, August 29.

NEWSPAPER MEN are perpetually trying to write plays about themselves, and when these efforts get as far as production, which is rarely, they almost always fail. Probably the primary reason is that those who write them are not good playwrights, but certainly a secondary cause is that the things which make journalism exciting to its practitioners mean nothing to the lay public. A biologist who tried to weave a drama around the laboratory would doubtless interpret it in terms puzzling to the outsider; and so the reporter who waits until the second edition has gone to press, and sits down to write "Act I" at the top of a sheet of copy-paper is almost always trying to record a world which exists only for him and his kind, and as to which the public's verdict will be that it had rather not hear any more about it. Roaring melodramas like "The Front Page" and "The Racket," or social satires like "Chicago" use the newspaper effectively as part of their machinery, but they are not really newspaper plays—not even "The Front Page," most of whose characters are Chicago reporters covering the criminal courts.

Mr. Ward Morehouse has written a real play about newspaper people, and its lack of success is due to both of the elements cited above; it is not a very good play, and even if it were, it would still and necessarily be written in a language which is Gaelic to the cloak-and-suit buyer out with one of Ginsberg's mannequins for the evening. He tells a tired and discouraged tale of the fatigues and heartaches of newspaper life. Journalism as seen on his stage is a strictly personal matter of long hours, nervous strain, underpayment, old men ruthlessly discharged to drop dead outside the door, foolish young moths who have read Richard Harding Davis, or about him, and flutter to the candle heedless of the piles of corpses all about them. His hero is a middle-aged rewrite man who has done his twenty years at inadequate salaries in all parts of the United States. He tries to break away into press agentry at $15,000 a year, is unutterably bored among the Babbitts, and goes back to the thrill of knowing, thirty-three minutes sooner than does the newspaper-buying public, that a Staten Island ferry has been sunk with all hands.

Some journalists have complained that the detail does not ring true, that these Thespian reporters are too excited over such trivia as a Bishop who inconveniently dies on the deadline; but to me it seemed as faithful a picture of the average office as the limitations of the stage permit. Mr. Morehouse, or his competent stage director, Mr. George Abbott, has even imported a genuine newspaper man, Russel Crouse, columnist of the new York Evening Post, to eat a sandwich in the second act; I thought he did this quite as well as most actors would write a column. Mr. John Cromwell plays the tired rewrite man who casually unmasks a hypocritical millionaire, enjoys the easy affection of a voluptuous lady secretary, keeps his son-in-law from similar enjoyment, and at last goes back to the harness which he affects to despise but cannot live without. He manages to be convincing, even when he is making the difficult pretence that he is a free lance, grinding out fiction and articles in a dark hotel room. His realism consists in not doing any work all the time the curtain is up.

Part of the genuineness of this play lies just in the fact that there is so little recognition in it of "the social significance of the newspaper." The preoccupation of these men with the day's work, their inadequate salaries, their liquor and their ladies, while exaggerated for the occasion, is closer to truth than would be any grandiose talk about "the power behind the throne." Mr. Morehouse is frequently sentimental; but his sentimentality is the personal sort of the city room itself, and not that falsely found in most fiction, which pictures the reporter as a world-weary and omniscient cynic, full of desperate secrets learned from kings and presidents.

Like journalism, which has done so much of late years to glorify "the fight game," professional boxing is a social phenomenon which offers unlimited oportunities for satiric treatment. The authors of "Ringside," unfortunately, have neither embraced these nor gone to Mr. Morehouse's alternative and given us a personal view of life in the squared circle. Their fable is a faded little stencil of conventional vice and virtue, with only one human portrait, the father of the champion. This lad is about to fight, and none too sure of victory. A sure-thing gambler seeks to persuade him to throw the contest, using among his inducements the burning kisses of a professional vamp, and a certified check for $100,000. The hero is tempted, is about to fall, his little-girl sweetheart dresses up in wolf's (evening) clothing and snatches him from the arms of the vamp. At the last moment before the fight, he decides to go straight. Does he win? Ask me another. The most exciting moment of the play is the scene in the ring, with a radio announcer telling the story of the fight, blow by blow, as it takes place. The thrill in this scene depends, of course, not at all on the skill of the authors and hardly on that of the actors. It is interesting just because prize fights are interesting. A play which involved an appendectomy, in which the patient (a new actor every performance) was actually cut open and his appendix removed, would be even more interesting, and for the same reason. It isn't pretty, and it isn't art; but it provides a temporary tingle.

B. B.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Indolent Reviewers

SIR: An English tourist operating a borrowed typewriter in a friend's room is perhaps not the most appropriate person to invite the New Republic's aid in assaulting the whole body of American criticism, but I hope that you will let me raise some questions briefly on your correspondence page. I should so very much like to know why, when copies of "The Road to Heaven" were sent out for review, it was necessary to summon in a chorus of village idiots in order that Mr. Beer's nightmare masterpiece should be mis-described, misinterpreted and patronized by people who seem incapable of following the very plain advertisement of the book's contents given on the title page. A "romance of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

morals" supplied with the further explanation, *"Primus in orbe deos fecit timor,"* really ought not to have been treated in ten reviews as a realistic tale, or in five worse reviews as a melodrama with a forced "happy ending." The ending of "The Road to Heaven" is happy, in a sense, as the ending of "Hamlet" is happy. The decent and indecent are comfortably dead and young Fortinbras, through no merit of his own, is invested with the realm of Denmark. Mr. Beer's Fortinbras, the insufferable Lamon Coe, is obviously a blackguard, a coward betimes and a wretched loafer whimpering for the moon to be handed down to him. Mr. Beer, with appalling irony, hands him down the moon, and perhaps gratifies his private humor by also handing him a shrewd little *bourgeoise* wife who will manage him and bully him until his bucolic heaven is again too small for him. I cannot imagine how the implications of this study escaped the reviewers. It is true that Mr. Beer speaks from behind his characters and through them, as a modern artist should. He has not Mr. Sinclair Lewis' "matey" habit of stepping out to tell you just what you should think. A certain intelligence and a close attention are called for. It will not at once occur to the unwary that Abner Coe is deliberately starving himself to death, or that Miss Parcher is not the sweetest lass alive. But are writers to be reduced to the blackboard and the pointer in the twentieth century? And, witness the Saturday Review of Literature, are they to be censured by gentry whose feelings are hurt on hearing a country lad describe a new moon as "skinny"?

I myself have written extremely bad, short-sighted reviews for provincial papers in my own country and can be tolerant of trivial slips and errors in haste, but I cannot tolerate such wretched twaddle as that expended on Mr. Beer's art in The Saturday Review and The World. God knows that our English reviewers are sufficiently inept on occasion, but they are at least capable of reading a title page and following a tale to its end without summoning in imagination's unstable help to get them through their job.

New York City. C. D. CHASE.

"Al Smith's Chances"

SIR: In his last article on the presidential race, "Al Smith's Chances," Mr. Bliven does well to name Montana with Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Illinois, Missouri and Wisconsin as the states in which Governor Smith must get the votes necessary to sum up, with the Solid South, the electing 266; but why fail entirely to class Nevada as a doubtful state—less doubtful than Illinois? Also Arizona and New Mexico?

In San Francisco recently a group of 900 street-car conductors and motormen balloted, Hoover receiving 20 and Smith 880 votes.

From such discussion of "Al" with working men in central California during the last two years, the writer believes that more than 80 percent of them will vote for Smith.

One does not see them when riding through Nevada in a sumptuously caparisoned Pullman, but there are many railroad men in that state and they are not without influence—a power that ruminates and rumbles back into the mines and rivulet farm valleys.

We will wager a whole-wheat doughnut to a Bliven daguerreotype (if he is that old) that Nevada will go for "Al" handily and handsomely in November.

Oakland, Cal. S. ROSS PARKER.

Europe and the Kellogg Treaty

SIR: In an editorial in the issue of August 22, "Should the Kellogg Treaty Be Rejected?" there are three statements that should not be left unchallenged. I accept your statement of facts.

1. If there is to be a misunderstanding between this country and Europe, let it be ironed out now while the author and his correspondents abroad are alive; only in this manner can it be properly settled. It would be contrary to the foreign policy of this country to have a treaty containing possibilities of embarrassing foreign entanglements stored away until such a time as some interested government should attempt to carry out the contract. The "wrath and indignation" you mention would be infinitesimal now compared to that of a future time when, under stress, we should place our interpretation on it. The time to interpret an agreement is before it is signed.

2. Your suggestion that the Senate ratify a treaty merely because European statesmen (who, as you say, "are far from being gullible") persist, or pretend to persist, in believing that our Secretary of State has the power to make treaties is even more dangerous. It would be a sad day for America if this policy of senatorial subservience and docile acquiescence should be adopted. It is more fitting that European statesmen learn the true status of our President and our Senate than that their alleged ignorance should bring about the omnipotence of the Executive and the atrophy of the Senate in foreign affairs.

3. The concluding sentence in your editorial suggests the strongest reason for repudiating the Kellogg treaty. Your example is apt, but your conclusion erroneous. If a blank check is given by John Doe to Richard Roe it may be filled in by Richard Roe and *not* by John Doe; if this anomalous Kellogg treaty is signed by America it will be a blank check for Europe "to say when and in what terms it shall be filled out."

VAL IRION.

Lake Charles, Ia.

[1. Our correspondent assumes that the difference of opinion regarding the significance of the Kellogg treaty is such that it can be "ironed out" now, in a comparatively short time. The New Republic does not believe anything of the sort is possible. Such misunderstandings between countries must be obliterated only by the slow passage of time.

2. The New Republic never suggested that the treaty should be ratified because Europe misunderstands American policy. The treaty should be ratified on its merits, and in spite of this misunderstanding.

3. We do not agree that the treaty constitutes a blank check signed by America, which Europe can fill out. The United States retains full liberty of action at all times, except as regards a dispute between herself and some other power.—THE EDITORS.]

"The Civilizing of Divorce"

SIR: In the article, "The Civilizing of Divorce," in your issue of August 1, I find a most extraordinary misstatement of the position of the Episcopal Church. It is likely that someone nearer the editorial office than I will have already called attention to it; but if not I am sure that many Episcopalians will be grateful for the printing of this note.

The article states "The conservatives have so far converted the Episcopal Church that there is now a strict canon which automatically deposes from the ministry any clergyman who remarries a divorced person, cause of the divorce notwithstanding." There is no foundation for such a statement. The canon under which the Church is now working was adopted in 1904. No amendment since has affected in any way its principle. It permits a clergyman to marry the innocent party in a divorce for adultery. There are very strict provisions as to method which often prevent the clergyman from doing the very thing which the canon intends to allow. But the principle is clear.

As to automatic deposition, it is necessary only to say that no clergyman can be automatically deposed from the ministry of the Episcopal Church for any cause whatever. Even gross and notorious immorality or publicly known crime will not permit of his deposition without an ecclesiastical trial, if he desires one.

There is much one would like to say on the intricate question which your editorial discusses so admirably. But my purpose in this note was not to comment on the question, but to correct a misstatement.

San Francisco, Cal. EDWARD L. PARSONS.

[We regret the error to which Bishop Parsons calls attention, and are glad to publish his letter of correction.—THE EDITORS.]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Gentlemanly Tradition

Memories and Reflections, 1852-1927, by The Earl of Oxford and Asquith, K. G. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. Two vols. 663 pages. $10.

THE Earl of Oxford's "Memories and Reflections" are the final gleanings from the fruitful field of experience which has already yielded his "Fifty Years of the British Parliament" and "The Genesis of the War." The reader is occasionally aware of the fact that the writer is obliged to sacrifice something of continuity and proportion in his narrative to the necessity of avoiding or passing lightly over episodes which formed the substance of these earlier records. The book is, accordingly, rather desultory in effect. There is an advantage, however, in the fact that the ground has largely been cleared of controversial matters. These can now be for the most part set aside, leaving the author free to write of himself and his personal interests, his friends and his family, with the simplicity and sincerity which were his true character, and with the genial, sometimes skeptical humor, the tolerance, the urbanity which were his by training, if not by temperament.

Wordsworth in his invocation of Milton besought his master to return to give us "manners," as well as "virtue, freedom, power." However much English politics may have lacked these last qualities, it has kept its gentlemanly tradition, though a decline in this respect is lamented by Mr. Spender and other recent observers. But among the earlier Victorian statesmen it was preëminent, with certain reservations for personalities. Melbourne's grace was touched with indifference and Palmerston's ease with arrogance; Peel never outgrew the stiffness of his north country ancestry; Lord John Russell had an incorrigible lightness, and Gladstone an evangelical seriousness; Disraeli was too Corinthian for sound English taste; but they left the tradition unimpaired to their successors—Salisbury, Harcourt, Haldane, Morley, Asquith. What gentlemen they were! It is permissible to fall back upon Shakespeare: We shall not look upon their like again.

Herbert Henry Asquith, like John Morley, was not to the manner born. It speaks much for the strength of the tradition, as well as for the personal quality of each, that they should have entered it so perfectly. Morley was the son of a doctor in the dismal industrial city of Blackburn. Asquith was born in the village of Morley, his family on both sides being engaged in the woolen trade, and nonconformists. Both found their initiation into life through school and university. Asquith was more fortunate than Morley in that he was sent to a school of great distinction, though not of the public school type—the City of London School, under the headmastership of Edwin A. Abbott. There was no cricket field on which the boys could learn to win Waterloos, no football or rowing; but there was an intellectual discipline which enabled Asquith to win a Balliol scholarship, and enter Oxford at the age of seventeen. Balliol was the leading college in intellectual things, with Jowett as Master, and Thomas Hill Green among the tutors. Doubtless the influence of the former, a master of the light touch on life, was precisely what the north country schoolboy needed. Asquith's career at Oxford was a brilliant one. He was President of the Union, gained a First Class, and was elected a Fellow of Balliol. When, on his elevation to the peerage, he took the title of Earl of Oxford, one feels that he had in mind not only Queen Anne's prime minister, Robert Harley, on whom she conferred the same title, but much more the University which was the kindly nurse of his youth.

Asquith was called to the bar in 1875, and among the most interesting of the characters drawn for us in his pages are those of the leading judges and barristers of the later nineteenth century. The survival value of a legal reputation is seldom great unless coupled with a parliamentary career, and it is rare that high success is won in both fields. Brougham was the most notable example in the nineteenth century, and his perennial fame is in contrast to that of Erskine, or Scarlett, both far his superiors as advocates. Coleridge, Hawkins, Richard Webster and Charles Russell are among the lawyers of whom Lord Oxford gives lively sketches. It was as junior to the last named that he gained distinction by his cross-examination of Macdonald, the manager of the Times, before the Commission appointed to examine the charges of that paper against Parnell. It was another great lawyer, Sir Henry James, who brought him into connection with Gladstone's second administration, and decided him to stand for Parliament in 1886, the same year as Haldane. Morley had entered the House of Commons four years previously.

Lord Oxford has given the account of his political career in "Fifty Years of the British Parliament," to which the present volumes merely furnish addenda. Home Secretary in Mr. Gladstone's ministry of 1892, he was in opposition during the ten years of Tory ascendancy, and returned to office in 1905 as Chancellor of the Exchequer under Campbell-Bannerman, whom he succeeded as Prime Minister. Probably the happiest period in his career was that of his premiership from 1907 to 1914. He was surrounded by friends, Morley, Haldane, Grey—a cabinet of gentlemen. He had the Home Rule Bill on his hands, and that brought on the constitutional crisis over the veto power of the House of Lords, but the cabinet had a strong case in Parliament and before the country. A fatal weakness showed itself in dealing with the Ulster volunteers and the mutinous cabal of army officers in 1914, but the leader of the Ulster rebels was Sir Edward Carson, also a gentleman, with whom the Premier had had relations of *camaraderie* during their early days at the bar. Another flaw was the understanding with France, of which the cabinet and the Liberal party were ignorant; but Sir Edward Grey was a gentleman, who made gentlemen's agreements; and he would have resigned from the Foreign Office if Parliament had not supported him on August 3, 1914.

The most important new matter in "Memories and Reflections" is in the first half of the second volume, in which Lord Oxford reviews his conduct of the War, with copious notes from his diary. What strikes the reader most is his tone of restraint, of moderation, of genial fatalism. It is all perfectly in the accepted manner of a British statesman at war, reminiscent of Lord Liverpool. Lord Oxford shared personally in the tragedy through the death in action of his own promising son, Raymond Asquith; but he speaks of this at the beginning of his book, and in his account of the War he preserves a stoical detachment. He is amused at the boyish escapades of Winston Churchill. He shows no bitterness at the conduct of Lord Fisher, in deserting the Admiralty at short notice. He is guarded in comment on Lord French, and warmly defends Lord Kitchener, of whom he paints a brilliant portrait. He relates with humor the meetings between the English ministers and the French, not forgetting an impassioned utterance of Winston Churchill on one of these occasions: *"S'ils savent que nous sommes gens qu'ils peuvent conter*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sur." At times his diary contains a pungent epigram, as when he remarks:

> Our two rhetoricians, Lloyd George and Winston, as it happens, have good brains of different types. But they can only think talking: just as some people can only think writing. Only the salt of the earth can think inside, and the bulk of mankind cannot think at all.

He defends the formation of the Coalition Ministry, but it is clear that thenceforward he had lost command. His old friends were gone, Morley at the outbreak of the War, Haldane shortly afterwards in consequence of a venomous press campaign. Now he found himself between Bonar Law and Lloyd George, the one playing for party, the other for personal advantage. When these two got together, the result could not be long delayed.

Earlier in his book Lord Oxford gives some instances of Bonar Law's character as a truculent and unscrupulous party leader. He quotes from his diary a conversation with Lloyd George in March, 1915.

> As for himself [Lloyd George] he declared that he owed everything to me, that I had stuck to him and protected him and defended him when every man's hand was against him, and that he would rather (1) break stones, (2) dig potatoes, (3) be hung and quartered (these were metaphors used at different stages of his broken but impassioned harangue) than do an act or say a word or harbour a thought that was disloyal to me, and he said that every one of his colleagues felt the same. His eyes were wet with tears, and I am sure that, with all his Celtic capacity for impulsive and momentary fervour, he was quite sincere. Of course, I assured him that I had never for a moment doubted him, which is quite true, and he warmly wrung my hand and abruptly left the room.

So much said, Lord Oxford has no need to comment on the events which forced him out of the government, the bare narrative of which is given in a memorandum written at the time by Lord Crewe. He might have saved face by appealing to the House of Commons. That would have resulted in the fall of the ministry, a division in the Liberal party and an exposure to the country and the world of the whole sordid intrigue. The fall of a government at war is not new in history. In that case colleagues divide responsibility with their chief. For the latter to resign alone is to take the entire burden upon his own shoulders, to go out before his countrymen as the scapegoat for the sins and errors of his associates in office. Lord Oxford resigned alone. It was the supreme test of a character and bearing which reached far above the tradition which he had so perfectly inherited and made his own. Again Shakespeare has said it: nothing in his long life in office became him like the leaving of it.

It is interesting to speculate on what would have resulted if Lord Oxford had remained in power until the end of the War. Perhaps there would have been no khaki election, no breaking of the pre-armistice agreement, with the aftermath of the starvation of Europe and a treaty of spoliation. Perhaps the gentlemanly tradition would have dominated the Conference of Paris, as it did the Congress of Vienna. But new forces were abroad in the world. It may be, on the contrary, that Lord Oxford would have shared the fate of Wilson. From that immeasurable collapse his fame is secure.

The last ten years of Lord Oxford's memoirs are among the best. He showed his sportsmanship by remaining in his place in the House of Commons, and when he was defeated in the khaki election by the constituency of East Fife, which he had represented since his entrance to Parliament, he went gallantly off to Paisley. These years out of office gave him fuller opportunity for that enjoyment of arts and literature which is part of the tradition. Lord Oxford and Lord Balfour were both literary statesmen. Lord Oxford will not be remembered as so brilliant a figure as Lord Balfour, but he had a quality of mind and style, and of personal charm, which may be thought of as Whig in contrast to Tory. To make politics part of the culture of the time is an art which they brought to perfection. It goes far to account for the greater richness of political life in England, as compared with that of France or Germany or ourselves. If England loses it, the loss will be more irreparable than that of her factories and ships.

R. M. L.

Nile, the Civilizer

The Nile and Egyptian Civilization, by Alexander Moret. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 497 pages. $7.50.

EGYPT, the land of Tutankhamen, has ever proved a fertile source of literary inspiration. If not all Egyptological monographs possess the charm of Maspero's artful sketch or the solidity of Breasted's tomes, excellent studies abound of Egypt's art, religion, funeral customs, technological activities. As is common with ancient civilizations, the social organization remains to us somewhat obscure, especially in its historic continuity.

Professor Moret's study, one of the latest volumes in the History of Civilization series, is a welcome addition to its line of predecessors. There is little new in the French scholar's book, but he possesses to an eminent degree the talent of his nationals to carry erudition lightly and to treat of difficult and at times even technical matters in a style that is lucid and comprehensible to the layman.

The section on Religion is, perhaps, of special interest. We are shown how in Egypt all aspects of life—art, literature, science, politics—were suffused with religious conceptions to such an extent as to become incomprehensible if religion is ignored. The reflection of human society in the supernatural realm is here clearly discernible. Thus, at Edfu, for example, Horus had Hathor for his wife and a little Horus-who-unites-the-two-hands for his son; while at Thebes, Amon, wedded to Mut, had a new Khonsu. These and other deities had their individual places of worship where they reigned supreme, but they were admitted as "guests" to the sanctuaries of other cities.

Moret's analysis of the being *Ka,* whose name enters etymologically into so many Egyptian divinities and sacred Kings, is novel and striking, if not wholly convincing. We read: "With a mitable determinative, the phallus, *Ka* writes the name of the bull, which symbolizes generation; the feminine *Ka-t* designates the female sexual organ and also the cow; the plural *Kau* means the foodstuffs which maintain life; and lastly, *Ka,* with the sign of the speaking man, means 'thought,' intellectual power, while with the cartouche it personifies the royal name *(ren),* or the visible and audible image of a mental concept." *Ka* thus stands for power, mystery, potency, generation, like the *mana* of primitive man, *Ka-mana.* This is illuminating, but should not be construed as indicating a direct derivation from primitive concepts. The very vagueness of the *mana* notion precludes the possibility of historical inferences in the absence of continuous historical data.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Similar difficulties arise when we are asked to accept the three forms in which gods appear as a chronological succession. First form: a beast, plant, object or being of any kind with indwelling spirit which later develops into a god. Second form: a hybrid figure in which the beast or object is combined with a human body. Third and last form: a purely human figure "from which the beast or fetish has disappeared altogether." Shades of Herbert Spencer! For to him we owe one of the earliest theories of just this type, even though he had, in this case, to put his evolutionary hypothesis on its head, in order to maintain a special theory. Overwhelming evidence would be necessary to prove that this chronological reconstruction, plausible though it seem and logical (all too logical!), actually represents successive historic stages. Needless to say, no such evidence is forthcoming. In most primitive societies we discover deities purely animal in form, others that are human, still others that are monstrous, beast-man, man-beast, or what not. Fancy will be fancy. Once the human imagination gets going along this line, it will seize upon any shape or creature available in experience or transmute it to suit its purpose. History is shot through with mind, not with logic. The "logic of history" is one of the irrational fancies of historians.

As was to be expected, Professor Moret does justice to the title of his study in placing the Nile in the very center of Egyptian history, thought, art, religion. It cannot be disputed, of course, that the civilization of the Nile valley would not have been what it was had there been no Nile and no valley. Also, the tremendous fascination exerted by the mighty stream over the minds of Egyptians is beyond dispute, and their culture readily reveals this fact. But other civilizations, those of Babylonia and Assyria, for example, or that of Greece, or that of the ancient Mayas, had many features—in art, religion, technology, politics—which were not unlike those of Egypt, without a Nile or a Nile valley to draw upon. How can one be so sure, then, where to draw the line between what the Nile contributed and what was due to the genius of the Egyptian people, or history or accident?

These are mere samples of the sort of strictures that could be made upon the more hypothetical sections of Moret's book. But withal it remains an excellent study, thorough, careful, intelligent, and, above all, readable and in spots alluring.

ALEXANDER GOLDENWEISER.

Another War—On Paper

We Fight for Oil, by Ludwell Denny. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 291 pages. $3.

ACCORDING to Mr. Denny, the United States and Great Britain are engaged in a bitter struggle for economic supremacy. At present the combat is limited to diplomatic and naval maneuvers, but at any time it may assume a more acute form. The stakes of the contest—Mr. Denny calls it a "fight," not altogether without reason—are the unappropriated petroleum resources of the world, 70 percent of which "is in countries whose weakness invites economic and political encroachment by major powers." The United States, according to Mr. Denny, has thus far had the worse of the struggle—American diplomacy has been dilatory and inept, and British naval strategy has assured Britannia's rule of the waves. Although the embattled admirals at Washington will doubtless agree that stupid civilians have allowed themselves to be duped by the British Admiralty, the high priests of the sacred State Department may be somewhat surprised to find themselves charged with incapacity and undue modesty. However that may be, Mr. Denny has amassed a surprising amount of interesting material concerning oleaginous diplomacy as it affects Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Russia, Rumania, and the Near East. Although the tale is not always savory, it is well told on the whole; Mr. Denny writes as a capable journalist.

In support of Mr. Denny's thesis there are certain indisputable facts. Petroleum is one of the most important raw materials of modern industrial civilization. Presumably its supply is not inexhaustible, and as yet no satisfactory substitute has been found for it. It not only keeps the wheels of peace-time transportation in full motion, but it has become an indispensable factor in modern war; in particular, the oil-tank has come to occupy the same strategic position in naval planning that was formerly assigned to the coaling station. Foreign offices have become oil-minded, and, to confound confusion, the British government has gone actively and aggressively into the oil business. The vast amount of diplomatic correspondence concerning petroleum is but one evidence of the neo-mercantilist philosophy of present-day statesmanship; unless we can escape from this vicious circle, we most certainly are headed for serious trouble.

Nevertheless, this book is unduly alarmist. We have had other bitter "wars" concerning raw materials, none of which ended in armed conflict or unconditional surrender. The most notable example was a "rubber war" against Great Britain, which is now chiefly important as demonstrating how dangerous it would be to have Mr. Hoover's credulity and irresponsibility installed in the White House. Then there was Mr. Fall's notable "oil war," the principal outcome of which was to enrich the campaign chest of the Republican party. It is somewhat surprising to hear Mr. Denny talk like Mr. Fall—to see that he bases most of his argument upon the ex-Secretary's theories concerning oil shortage, British drainage of American resources, Anglican acquisitiveness in open territory, and Imperial exclusiveness wherever the Union Jack flies. A good journalist should be less credulous. Mr. Denny's chapter on Mosul and the Turkish Petroleum Company indicates that he has imbibed freely of the moonshine distilled by the American Committee Opposed to the Lausanne Treaty; in the light of such naïveté, his documentation is much less impressive. It is also far-fetched to say that "in oil is written the British and German-Turk military campaigns in the Caucasus, the Allied interventions against the Soviets and support of counter-revolutionary governments, and the international conferences at Genoa and the Hague."

Needless to say, Mr. Denny does not advocate open war for control of the world's oil resources. He merely believes that "the danger cannot be removed by denying its existence." In common with the reviewer, he credits small importance to after-dinner speeches proclaiming Anglo-American solidarity and declaring that war between blood-brothers is unthinkable. Unlike the reviewer, he believes that the true solution of the oil problem is an agreement between the two empires which "would involve sharing raw materials and markets, and dividing sea supremacy, without violating the rights of weaker nations." Assuming that the two governments could arrive at such an agreement—an almost fantastic assumption—it would possess little validity for the other nations of the world, great and small, which are increasing in national self-conscious-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ness and are determined to possess a larger share in the exploitation of their natural resources and in the control of their domestic markets.

Certainly, Mr. Denny is correct in believing that drastic limitation of naval armaments is essential to any solution of the international oil problem. He is less nearly correct when he dismisses conservation of petroleum as a practicable solution; we shall be obliged, whether the government and the oil men wish it or not, to reform our wasteful system of production and our profligate methods of consumption. He is on insecure ground when he assumes that the economic interests of Great Britain and the United States, however sharply competitive, are mutually exclusive. He misses an important point in not condemning the growing alliance between business and diplomacy which confuses beyond hope of recognition the interests of individual Americans and the interests of the American people. What Mr. Denny proposes in effect is an Anglo-American economic alliance within a neo-mercantilist system of international relations. There is no gateway to peace along this road.

Mr. Denny has brought down to date a story which has been told in various forms by Davenport and Cooke, de la Tramerye, Francis Delaisi, Anton Mohr, and others. In the hands of the critical reader his book will be a useful manual. EDWARD MEAD EARLE.

Recent Fiction

Spider Boy, by Carl Van Vechten. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

MR. VAN VECHTEN excels in the pleasure-giving quality of fiction—and not since "The Blind Bow Boy" has he given so much pleasure as in "Spider Boy." His characteristic procedure is to take the gray goods of life and convert them to decorative uses by fantastic patterns and brilliant colors. He is at his best when his characters themselves are chiefly concerned with pleasure, either in connoisseurship as in "The Blind Bow Boy" or "The Tattooed Countess" or in trade, as in "Spider Boy." For "Spider Boy" is a scenario for a moving picture and the characters are actors therein. Obviously such material yields easily to Mr. Van Vechten's uses; he merely has to brighten its realism into extravaganza, a delicate operation which he does with a scrupulous sense of proportion. One may question Mr. Van Vechten's serious purpose in life, but not his light touch upon it.

R. M. L.

The Hotel, by Elizabeth Bowen. New York: Lincoln MacVeagh: The Dial Press. $2.50.

READING this novel is a painful pleasure, but one not to be missed by lovers of excellence. Elizabeth Bowen reveals a delicate skill in the exposure of nerves that produces a sympathetic jump and shrinking in the sensibilities of the reader, counterbalanced by a pleasurable shock of recognition, and delight in the precision of her execution. A Riviera hotel is her operating theater, and the principal subject is Sydney Warren—a passionate and sensitive girl, repressed to the last degree of British self-restraint, and worshipful of the beautiful and disdainful Mrs. Kerr, who—with complete detachment and exquisite skill—amuses herself by a cat-and-mouse sportiveness with the girl's emotional life. The "action" deals almost exclusively with psychological states, but this merely sharpens the edges of its thin cruelties. The advent of a young clergyman who proposes to rescue Sydney is hardly more than an interruption in the progress of the tragedy, and even Sydney's final desperate defiance is inconclusive as a *dénouement*. Mrs. Kerr's son appears, and serves as an instrument in her pastime, of which he, too, is made a victim. Incidental personages, who are more delicate forms of the same psychological revelation, are presented sharply in flashes of mingled irony and pathos, and unforgettably recognized. The book is a brilliant feat of emotional analysis and exposition—a delight to the intelligence and a pang to the sympathies. D. B. W.

Big Matt, by Brand Whitlock. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $2.

THIS is the novel of American politics with a governor of a midwestern state, his political henchman-nemesis, a graceful, idealistic daughter, and a few state officials in the background. It is as expected as a college lecture and presumably about as close to the realities, less "gripping" than the headlines to be read any day of similar doings. The reformer's pattern of politics, to himself.

R. H.

Men Atwhiles Are Sober, by Stephen Raushenbush. New York: A. and C. Boni. $2.50.

IT IS not easy to understand just why "Men Atwhiles Are Sober" is an interesting and even, in a mild way, moving piece of work. It is possessed of plot, story and incident. Yet it is not enough to say of it that "it holds the reader's interest" because of its mere interlocking continuity; nor that it is read to the end "to see how it will come out." The situations are generally not unfamiliar: filial pity at a death-bed, a party with considerable drunkenness, a fist fight between two men over a woman's name, and a South American tropical scene, like those in O. Henry's stories. The characters, too, are literary: a chorus girl with bitter wisdom neatly stored in epigrams, and a protagonist capable of saying in all seriousness: "Head high to the wind and hungry. That's the way I've always wanted to die. So, Rodney, old thing, if you will kindly oblige me with the loan of that gun you keep around here somewhere, I'll be able to do the decent thing for once."

And yet there is in all these stock situations a sort of freshness and reality and passion; qualities which tend to evaporate when the author deals with love and conscience as they occur in real life. "Men Atwhiles Are Sober" reveals a mind which lives in books and romance as sailors were once believed to live in ships which floated in the rare, high air of the upper atmospheres: when it sinks into reality it flounders, just as those same mythical medieval sailing men, who were drowned when chance forced them into the thick air that other men breathe by necessity.

M. P. L.

Contributors

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY is the author of the "The Harp Weaver and Other Poems" and other books of poetry.

CARL SANDBURG, the Chicago poet, is the author of "Slabs of the Sunburnt West," "Smoke and Steel," and other books.

ALEXANDER GOLDENWEISER is an anthropologist, the author of "Early Civilization."

EDWARD MEAD EARLE is associate professor of history in Columbia University, and the author of "Turkey, the Great Powers, and the Bagdad Railway."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED